

AUGUST · 1932

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ANDERSON

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Capitalism*

FELIX MORROW

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of the B.E.F.*

M. J. OLGIN

*The Soul of
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*Articles, Stories, Poems,
Book Reviews:*

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FELIX MORROW

THE BONUS ARMY

"Heroes of 1917—Bums of 1932" was a favorite slogan of the bonus marchers; but its bitter meaning was only driven home by gouging bayonets and tear gas.

The bonus army was not so much a cross section of the American working class as it was a cross section of those elements hitherto untouched by the grimmer aspects of the class struggle. Few of the veterans had ever been in any kind of strike; a large part of them came from sections of the South and West where struggle is just beginning. Many were farmers whom only total ruin had begun to jolt out of their self-centredness. Many had been but newly thrust into the ranks of the proletariat: salesmen who would never sell again, storekeepers forever separated from their counters.

There was in their anger against the government, until the last stages, a kind of plaintiveness, like that of sons against a hard father, an annoyance that it was taking him so long to meet their needs. Much of their resentment was directed against Hoover, as if he alone were responsible for their plight. Even after the police had killed William Hushka and shot and beaten scores of other veterans, in a provocative attack launched to give a semblance of excuse to the subsequent use of the military, some of the veterans spoke of the police "losing their heads." But the infantry, the cavalry and machine gun squads did not lose their heads. They destroyed the bonus camps in military manoeuvres executed as calmly and coolly as if directed against so many sandbags on the parade ground. The cannon fodder of tomorrow taught the soldiers of yesterday what the state is: an instrument for the suppression of the working class.

The veterans learned to the full, in those last bitter hours, what they could expect from the state. And they went from Washington only because naked flesh had, finally, to move away from the stab of steel and the hurt of gas. They fought the cavalry and infantry at every step. They gave way by inches only when they could bear pain no longer.

As they looked up into the unformed faces of the boys riding them down, or back at the alert lads behind the bayonets, the harried veterans saw themselves, fifteen years ago, marching off to war. No doubt these boys had been told, in preparation for this dirty task, that it was part of the crusade for democracy and a better world; tomorrow, after thorough injections with the virus of 1917, brought skillfully up to date, these boys will be sent to die fighting against the Soviet Union.

A veteran, eyes burning from tear gas, cried out to the troops: "Go on, boys, do your job well, and maybe someday you'll get a bonus."

Why, it may be asked, did the federal authorities launch a

military offensive against the bonus army? Much of the political offensive against the bonus army had succeeded. The control of the main body of the B.E.F. was in the hands of Department of Justice agents and stool pigeons; concerted action by the bonus army and its sense of solidarity had been broken up for two months; as many as a third of the marchers had given up and left Washington; the remainder seemed dispirited enough and sufficiently docile to do as they were told.

But political trickery had finally run up against hard reality. Had it been a strike situation, the men would have been bamboozled into going back to work. But there was no work for them to go back to, they had no homes and food to go back to. A few nights before the attack, I talked to the men in the camp on Pennsylvania Avenue, after an airplane had flown over and dropped leaflets notifying them of the evacuation. This camp, which was to fight the first pitched battle with the police, housed about 2,000 men, all Southerners, a considerable number from Texas. They were as politically immature a bunch of men as could be found in America, ultra-patriotic Americans, jim-crowing the Negroes in their contingents. Many of them still had faith in Commander Waters; they thought his pussyfooting and cooperation with the police was part of a subtle plan of campaign (Waters, at that time, was still talking against evacuation). Some of them thought Police Superintendent General Glassford was really their friend: hadn't he contributed some money to the commissary? But one thing was burned into their brain. They were not going to leave Washington. When they had first come to Washington, the authorities had tried to get them out to Camp Bartlett, nearly ten miles away from the Capitol. They had defeated that move, they had defeated the attempt to get them out to Camp Anacostia, the main camp of the B.E.F., three miles from the Capitol, and they weren't going to move now. They were going to stay right on Pennsylvania Avenue where everybody could see them.

"If I went anywhere else, I might as well have stayed in Dallas" said a gaunt Texan, and the listless men around him nodded solemnly in agreement.

A North Carolina farmer who had lost his farm added: "They'll have to kill me to get me out of here. Anyway, then my wife'll get the money. She'll be better off than if I went home and we starved together." Other men wanted to know whether, if they were killed, their families would get the money right away. The thought seemed to please them.

One had talked with a marine who had been in the contingent in which thirty marines had refused to guard the Capitol against the veterans; he wondered whether the rest of the army would act like that. He was answered by another who had talked with

a friendly soldier. The regular army men had been sympathetic when the vets first came; but since then, all leaves had been cancelled, the boys were getting tired of sitting in the barracks, they were given daily pep talks, and were wishing the vets would leave town. The Texan, who was out of the army only three years, said heavily: "The trouble with those fellows is they get fed regular." A Negro spoke up, timid among the Southern whites: "If we'd only stuck together and done things, they'd never gotten to the point of putting us out." The white nodded. "What the hell, we've seen machine guns before," said a former salesman from Georgia, with forced cheerfulness.

It was these men, physically weakened by years of poverty and by the horribly inadequate food and shelter they had been getting in Washington, their morale well-nigh broken by the indecisiveness of their bonus campaign, naive to the point of helplessness in the face of their enemies, who at the last would not give up their shacks until their ranks had been broken up by gun-fire and they were driven out by tear gas. Their government-controlled leadership had organized them into feebleness, but it could not organize them out of existence. After perhaps a third had left, in the demoralized days following the adjournment of Congress, new contingents began coming in to swell the ranks, and many more were on the road to Washington. And the first trickle of the unemployed had started, with countless thousands preparing to follow them. The government consummated its political offensive with a military offensive.

The veterans began streaming into Washington the latter part of May. A thousand were there when the Oregon contingent of 300 arrived on May 30th. Among its leaders was Walter W. Waters, the superintendent of a fruit canning factory who had left his well-paid job to join the bonus march. He got into Washington a day ahead of his own men, saw General Glassford, and when his contingent arrived, was in command of the situation. He had the billets, the food, and the backing of General Glassford; he became commander. As other contingents arrived, Waters gathered a group about him: H. B. Foulkrod, since exposed as a Burns agent, formerly engaged in "industrial work" in Philadelphia; Doak E. Carter, Chief of the Pennsylvania Railroad police in Cleveland during the shopmen's strike of 1922—there were men in camp who had been clubbed by him then; A. H. Milton, who had been a stool pigeon in the Workers Ex-Servicemen's League; French, who was recognized by former Wobblies as a Department of Justice agent who had operated on the coast. With this group, backed by the Federal authorities, in control of the B.E.F., the betrayals of the ensuing weeks are not surprising.

The marchers had come across country in a triumphant surge. But in Washington they soon found themselves organized out of their militancy, regimented into indecisiveness. For the first two weeks most of them slept practically on the bare ground; there was no organizing of the work of building shelters. The gathering of food was sabotaged from beginning to end. A man who worked in the general commissary told me that farmers' associations and individuals were writing in throughout the two months offering quantities of food; most of the offers were ignored, even when transportation was also offered or the food was within easy trucking distance. Truckloads of food were left on nearby roads to rot. Funds poured in with no accounting.

From the first, contingents came in who refused to go out to Anacostia flats, and instead took over lots and partly demolished buildings in the city. These had some autonomy. But in Anacostia a dictatorship was quickly set up. About 500 Military Police were picked, given clubs and police powers, and they used them. Anybody who complained about anything was run out of camp or turned over to the police as a Red. Separate kitchens were set up for the M.P.'s and for the officers and commanders. They constituted a separate class: recognizable by their air of pugnacious authority, their well-fed look, their conspicuously better dress, especially the commanders and officers, in new military clothes and shiny leather puttees.

The only demonstration organized by Waters was during the first week, the June 7th parade. After that, mass action was frowned on. That Waters could get away with this, shows how little the bonus army understood the implications of their march on Washington. Instead of mass pressure, a legislative committee was set up to lobby for the bonus bill, with the Burns agent, Foulkrod, as chairman.

A whole series of patriotic ceremonies was instituted, from a solemn service for bonus marchers at the tomb of the Unknown

Soldier to the daily rising and lowering of the flag at Anacostia. The Red scare, with all its hoary subterfuges, was raised. Dynamite was duly found in Anacostia, "in an area which had just been vacated by members of the Workers Ex-Servicemen's League, a Communist organization." General Glassford exposed a Red plot to precipitate rioting. As part of the story of the June 7th parade every Washington paper carried items like this: "In the ranks were 100 Reds, designated as shock troops of the Communist forces—whose specific instructions from their leaders were to provoke 'bloodshed by rioting and force'." Throughout the period of the bonus march the newspapers were filled with lynch stuff; an example is the Washington Post cartoon on June 7, showing a vet beating a whiskered Red who is seeing stars from the concussions and is being told: "we have only one flag, see! The stars and stripes!" Waters issued orders that the men weed out radicals and turn them over to the police. The rank and file organization set up with the aid of the Workers Ex-Servicemen's League to get some action for the bonus, experienced a wave of white terror. Its leaders, Pace and Eicker, were threatened with death by the head of the M.P. in Waters' presence. Waters' M.P.'s were surprised to learn that Reds were not, legally, free game, but their surprise did not abate their strong-arm tactics. The Red hunt was given religious sanction by Father Charles E. Coughlin, Detroit's radio preacher of the "golden hour sermon," who donated \$5,000 to the veterans' fund "to show that Communism is not the way out," making a condition of his gift that Communist propaganda be kept from the camps. Twice, when other Red scares lacked, the men at Anacostia were tumbled out of bed in the middle of the night on the cry that the Reds were coming to raid their commissary.

The attempt to incite the marchers to violence against the rank and file organization was a failure; but as a manoeuvre to stifle any insurgent move against the Waters control, it had some success; loyalty to the B.E.F. organization was made synonymous with patriotism, and the threat of having food cut off and being thrown out of the billets, made support of the Rank and File Committee activities a hazardous affair. Incoming contingents were regimented in simple fashion. They were picked up on the road by "recruiting officers" selected by Waters, and escorted into the safe-keeping of Camp Anacostia.

Spontaneous attempts at mass action were headed off, often quite crudely. On June 18th, when the Senate defeated the Bonus Bill, more than three fourths of the 20,000 men in the bonus army turned up at the Capitol. When the news of the defeat was announced, spokesmen rose from the throng to demand a permanent picket of the Capitol. Waters was hurriedly summoned, and after praising the men for being gentlemen, led them in singing America, and told them to disperse. Still the men stayed on the Capitol steps. Then Foulkrod pleaded tearfully with the men to go back to their billets. "Don't antagonize the police or the citizens. They are our friends. We want to keep them."

Throughout the bonus army stay, the citizens were as far as possible segregated from the men. The first weeks they were ordered not to fraternize in camp "on the ground of health precautions." Whenever a demonstration began, the police, with the aid of bonus leaders, proceeded to isolate the bonus marchers. A few days before Congress adjourned, an insurgent California group prepared to sleep on the Capitol lawn. About three thousand citizens mingled with the veterans. Police lines could do nothing, attempts to break up the crowd into small groups by running motorcycles through were unavailing. Solidarity between veterans and citizens had been thoroughly established. Women in the crowd were booing the police. There was a hurried consultation between General Glassford and Roy W. Robertson, leader of the California contingent. Robertson called for the veterans to come forward and the citizens to fall back. A police line was then established between the two groups. The enormous crowd of Washingtonians stood around aimlessly by themselves, then dispersed; the veterans, a small number by themselves were very easily handled afterward by the police.

This Robertson played a very useful role. He had left California with 2800 men and had systematically broken up the group, until he came into Washington with only about twenty of his original men; weeks later members of his first group drifted in with bitter stories. Just before coming across from Virginia, Robertson picked up enough small groups to make a hundred men. He arrived in Washington with a fanfare of suspiciously favorable publicity; a brace he wore down his back to support a broken



PEACE: FALL MODEL

neck helped dramatize him. He announced that he would not associate with Waters, that he wanted action and was against dictatorship. Many before him had been saying it, but for good and sufficient reasons, it was Robertson upon whom the searchlight of publicity played.

The men wanted to picket the Capitol. He led them to the Capitol and put them through as gruelling an ordeal as men could bear. Instead of a two-hour daily picket, he had them marching, with little food and no shelter, for four days, night and day. Here, though they were being betrayed, one saw the calibre of the men. Here was something that seemed to them worth doing, and they did it, though they broke their health and their feet. They marched, in a single-line picket, down and up the Capitol plaza, singing, and then for long periods walking with no sound but their steps and the creaks of their broken shoes. When their shoes burned them so they could walk no longer, they took them off and marched barefooted. Each night, as it grew very late, and the people of Washington went to bed, and they marched with no one watching them, they turned to the sweet sentimental songs of their youth, things like "Oh Genevieve" and "In the Gloaming." One saw, starkly, the grim turn in the process of American life. They had grown up to sing these songs evenings on the porches of small towns. If one closed one's eyes, one saw the quiet scene; then one looked at the plodding line of broken hulks in torn, dirty rags.

The most brazen sell-out of these men came on July 16th, when Congress adjourned. As the news filtered through the camps that Congress was adjourning, a movement to the Capitol began. By noon the plaza was filled, the police line was rushed soon after, and the men took possession of the Capitol steps. Waters was hurriedly sent for. Meanwhile, a nurse was put up on the stand when the situation grew tense to lead the boys in singing songs. Strategically placed men lustily took up the tune. The same fellows equally lustily hailed Waters when he arrived. There was a little farcical stage play: Glassford loudly accused Waters of leading the unlawful demonstration, and arrested him, sending him to the cellar of the Capitol. The lusty voices raised a cry of "We want Waters," and Glassford at last gracefully yielded. Waters, now placed at the head of the men, gave them a patriotic speech and announced he was going to see Speaker Garner. He returned to declare he had been given Garner's word that Congress would not adjourn until it had reconsidered the bonus. That meant Congress would not adjourn that day. Therefore, Waters pleaded that the men disperse. At the same moment Garner was telling newspapermen he had promised Waters nothing.

Later in the day came Robertson's turn. As it became known that Congress actually was adjourning, the men began to flock back and forth to the Capitol. Near midnight the Capitol plaza was again filled. The Rank and File Committee had announced two days before that when Congress adjourned, the picket would be moved to the White House, and the next day Robertson had made a similar announcement. So, when the light went out in the Capitol dome, signifying the adjournment of Congress, and Robertson began to march the men off Capitol Hill, the cry went up, "On to the White House!"

What happened then sounds like a nightmare. Robertson led the men farther and farther away from the White House, down to the flats near Maryland Avenue. In the pitch dark there, he announced he would hold a meeting, and ordered the men to sit down. Time passed with nothing said. A policeman on a motorcycle drew up and told Robertson half his men were still at the Capitol. Robertson said he would go after them. He was gone twenty minutes while the men sat around uneasily. Then he came back, without the other men—as far as I could check up, he had, apparently, led them somewhere else and dispersed them—and proceeded to give a long, leisurely talk on what a fine, patriotic, gentlemanly lot the bonus marchers were. He seized upon every interruption to drag out his talk. One kind of interruption he ignored: a group had meanwhile attempted to picket the White House and been beaten up by the police: "What about picketing the White House," came cries; but these Robertson chose not to hear. As he talked, General Glassford arrived, and Robertson turned to singing his praises, what a friend of the bonus army he was, then called for three cheers for General Glassford. Robertson ended by announcing that a conference on further action would be held the next day.

It all sounds incredible. Men had marched off Capitol Hill to picket the White House and been completely sidetracked. One must, of course, remember that here was a crowd utterly inex-

perienced. Here was their first lesson in misleadership, at the hands of the government itself.

Robertson had fulfilled his task. He announced, a few days later, that he would lead his men out of Washington on a tour of the country. When the appointed day came, practically none followed him; they had been led to sufficiency by the nose, but they would not be led out of Washington. Robertson left in his car with his chauffeur; he had done enough to merit a rest, anyway he had probably outlived his usefulness.

The days after the adjournment of Congress were gloomy and dispirited. During the week following, as one had expected, perhaps as many as a third of the bonus army left. The next step was to picket the White House to demand an extra session of Congress, but Waters refused to move. The men stayed around in camp, with nothing to do, stagnating, their morale oozing out of them, the food poorer than ever.

The Rank and File Committee made two attempts to picket the White House, first on July 20th and again on the 25th. They had a difficult problem. On the one hand, they were but the vanguards of the thousands who did not picket; they had to show these other thousands that something could be done toward getting the bonus. On the other hand, they had to show these other thousands that marching with the Reds did not mean suicide; it was plain from the beginning that the police would attempt to precipitate a riot and smash what militancy remained in Washington.

At every corner the police tried to gang the picket. The men in front were held up while the police pushed the men in back forward, packing them tightly. Then a policeman would seize somebody and hurl him against the crowd. But the men kept their discipline, calling out to each other, "No trouble, men," "Keep ranks," "Don't give them any excuse, boys." Someone would be arrested, and men would start forward to release him. But each time the cry went up: "Don't give them any excuse, boys." Neither time did the police succeed in starting a riot. The second picket the police were openly provocative. For no reason at all men were clubbed, cripples hobbling along with the aid of the sticks were brutally hurled forward. But the men continued to walk slowly, grimly determined to have their way.

Before these pickets could begin to work, a ferment among the bonus marchers as a whole, Glassford raised the question of evacuation, and the men's attention was turned to that. Waters announced he would fight it—in court. On the last day, however, he agreed with Glassford, and asked the men in the Pennsylvania Avenue camp, the first to be evacuated, to clear out and go to Camp Bartlett, a privately owned tract ten miles from the Capitol, which had been turned over to Waters.

Though he had not at first dared to approve of the evacuation move, it fitted right in with Waters' plan, which was nothing less than to start a Fascist Army. Some wealthy people, he said, have approached him and offered financial aid to put his army on a permanent basis, buying it a base of operations where it could be housed and raise part of its own food, its purpose: "to stand between the constitution and the forces of anarchy." It was, Waters announced in his B.E.F. News, to be called the "Khaki Shirts." "Inevitably such an organization brings up comparison with the Fascisti of Italy and the Nazi of Germany. For five years Hitler was lampooned and derided. But today he controls Germany. Mussolini before the war was a tramp printer, driven from Italy because of his views. But today he is a world figure." And why not Waters?

So General Glassford's move to get the men out of Washington was quite satisfactory to Waters, who wanted to get them away from the influence of the rank and file. But just when everything looked so rosy, the Southerners in the Pennsylvania Avenue Camp told Waters to go to hell, put their backs to the wall and dared the police and the Federal troops to put them out. As the fighting began, Waters—a hysterical and feminine type like Hitler—ran up to General Glassford and cried: "I am not responsible for this. These men are no longer under my control."

That many of the veterans whom he betrayed will join him is doubtful; men learn under fire. These men must be warned away from Waters' "Khaki Shirts," from Father Cox's "Blue Shirts" and other Fascist movements which are springing up. The government which on Bloody Thursday found its troops sufficient to suppress the hungry, will tomorrow find it needs the aid of Fascist squads. The most important immediate, large-scale struggle is to win the veterans and the unemployed away from Fascist leaders and for the leadership of the revolutionary workers.

PHILIP RAHV

THE LITERARY CLASS WAR

In the capitalist countries proletarian literature has as yet not reached adulthood, its most active forces being at present chiefly engaged in breaking ground for the sowing of the vital seed of Marxism. From the October Revolution it received a tremendous impetus, yet it is only with the late onrush of economic catastrophe throughout the world that it began moving towards a determined extirpation of all liberal, reformistic elements within itself. Tearing asunder the last vestigial piece of bourgeois-esthete fancy-drapery, it proclaimed its position to be that of irreconcilable class-antagonism. True, a literature of social protest against capitalism has always existed, but being based on the premisses of Idealism—in the main without any overt awareness of its resultant anti-Marxist orientation—it failed to formulate a clear dialectico-materialistic world-view. Consequently such expression can be placed under the category of proletarian literature only when that concept is apprehended in extremely general terms.

The urgent task of the Marxist critic today is manifest. He must carve out a road for the proletarian writer, who, living as he does under the constant pressure of the prevailing ideas derived from the property-relationships of existing society, is faced with immense obstacles in his struggle to liberate himself from various bourgeois preconceptions which he still unconsciously adheres to. It is the critic's task to indicate how the dynamics of dialectic materialism can vitalize the new proletarian expression, and what form their integration into the warp and woof of this expression should take. A more definite frontier between the proletarian and the bourgeois in letters should be established. This of course, necessitates a thorough critical scrutiny of bourgeois trends in this field; just as every discussion of socialism implies a corresponding discussion of capitalism, so every discussion of proletarian literature implies a corresponding discussion of bourgeois literature; the latter is the thesis, the former the antithesis, and it is the classless society of the future that will ultimately resolve the contradiction between the two by creating the economic basis for a new superstructural equilibrium.

Recognizing its present developmental stage as elementary, the critic who attempts to build a theoretical scaffolding for proletarian literature can but partially base his argument on what is actually being produced in capitalist countries at the present time. A theoretical formulation *wholly* based on actual proletarian practice would run contrary to dialectic because it would largely ignore the dynamic mobility of class-consciousness; hence, in writing of proletarian literature, the Marxist critic has his eye on the future as well as on the present, and the authenticity of his analysis cannot be invalidated by the examination of his statements in the light of present-day facts alone.

The Idea of Katharsis Revitalized:

The Greek idea of katharsis in art is one of the most fertile conceptions ever devised. However, its classic formulation by Aristotle as a process effecting a proper purgation of the emotions through pity and terror, is a static, passive conception quite in line with the needs of a slave-owning class endowed with cultural tastes and appreciative of the great art of tragedy, but unwilling to permit the even tenor of its parasitic existence to be disturbed by gruesome realities. Thus the "significant change" effected in the reader or spectator by the katharsis leaves him limp and reconciled to the "immutable laws of life." After the grand spectacle of a Sophoclean tragedy, the Greek gentleman went home to his slaves, stimulated indeed, but resigned to the whims of the gods and "human nature." This form of katharsis is merely a sort of transcendental mental laxative for a cultured leisure class.

Nevertheless, a consistent examination of the qualitative properties of artistic creation leaves one with the conviction that without katharsis that creation loses all significance, loses that high gravity which is the most characteristic function of art. Within proletarian literature one can discern the implicit form of a new katharsis, likewise a purgation of the emotions, a cleansing, but

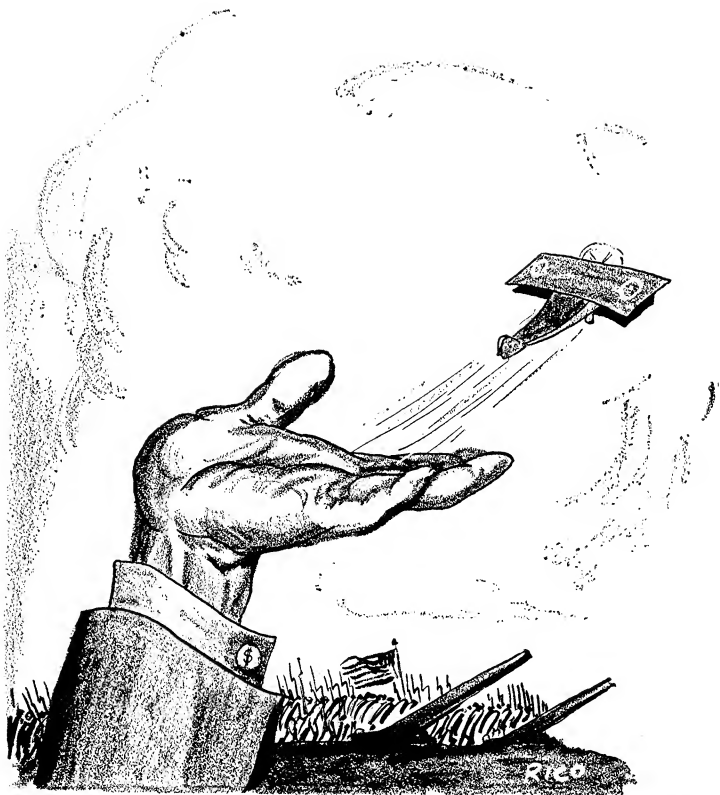
altogether of a different genus: *a cleansing through fire*. Applying the dynamic viewpoint of dialectics, a synthesizing third factor is added to the Aristotlean pity and terror—and that is militancy, combativeness. The proletarian katharsis is a release through action—something diametrically opposed to the philosophical resignation of the older idea. Audaciously breaking through the wall that separates literature from life, it impels the reader to a course of action, of militant struggle; it objectifies art to such a degree that it becomes instrumental in aiding to **change the world**. A proletarian drama, for instance, inspires the spectator with pity as he identifies himself with the characters on the stage; he is terror-stricken by the horror of workers' existence under capitalism; but these two emotions finally fused in the white heat of battle into a revolutionary deed, with the weapon of proletarian class-will in the hands of the masses. This is the vital katharsis by means of which the proletarian writer fecundates his art.

The impotence of bourgeois literature is best evidenced by the utter lack of katharsis within it; it is no longer capable of its traditional static signification. In its place it substitutes disgust, or simply a series of shocks attendant upon the exhibition of various *naturalia*. The literature of the bourgeoisie when it was still a revolutionary class in society, was still capable of katharsis. Now, however, in its stage of decline and imminent collapse, the signification of katharsis is manifestly impossible, for the reason that the class of which this literature is a reflection has already lost all belief in itself. Thus the novels of a writer like William Faulkner leave the reader with nothing: it is merely stylized photography, the same old treadmill of naturalism, with the wheels going around a little faster—in the thickening twilight.

Commenting on Dreiser's *American Tragedy*, Irving Babbitt writes: "He has succeeded in producing in this work something genuinely harrowing; but one is harrowed to no purpose. One has more than the full measure of tragic qualm but without the final relief and enlargement of spirit that true tragedy succeeds



Dan Rico



Dan Rico

somehow in giving, and that without resort to explicit moralizing. It is hardly worth while to struggle through eight hundred very pedestrian pages to be left at the end with a feeling of sheer oppression." Quite true. But of course such a confirmed Brahmin and arch-defender of the status quo as Prof. Babbitt cannot be expected to think anything out to its logical conclusion. The Back Bay aristocracy does not believe in thinking things out to their logical conclusions. From Babbitt's idealistic postulates (this gentleman considers Nature as a philosopher in pursuit of an "inner check"—for the workers of course; the greed of capitalism knows no check save the organized might of the exploited masses) it follows that if Dreiser has only wished he could have signified his material: hence the bald accusation of deliberate willfulness. The fact is, however, that no katharsis can be effected by a writer who is not consciously up in arms against capitalism, who does not visualize the free, rational society of the future. When he wrote *The American Tragedy*, Dreiser was still in his phase of darkest pessimism, reducing life-phenomena to "physico-chemical terms;" this point of view is just as much a reflection of bourgeois collapse as the philosophy of Spengler, despite the fact that even then Dreiser was already pointing to the moneytheistic spirit of capitalism as the determining factor in the stultification of American life—but lacking the dialectic revolutionary solution, he was incapable of handling his material in any other way than the way he did. Literature is the integration of experience, but experience cannot be integrated when the human signification is lacking: and *capitalism and human signification don't mix*. Proletarian literature, on the other hand, supplies that want with its own form of katharsis. Every instance of a class-unconscious worker gaining class-consciousness is katharsis, every strike, every militant action, every aggression on the part of the proletariat is katharsis. Proletarian literature is replete with human signification.

In defining tragedy (and this definition is generally applicable to all works of art) Aristotle stated: "It is an action that is complete and whole, and of a certain magnitude; for there may be a whole that is wanting in magnitude." Here too we notice the constitutional weakness of bourgeois literature and the foundational conformity of proletarian literature to the classic conception of what an effective literary work should be, of course with the important modifications concomitant with the changes in economy. Joyce's *Ulysses*, for example, is marked with a certain magnitude, but only in a negative sense. It is the magnitude of death, not of life. As to the criterion of an organic whole, there is no question that it does not exist. Mrs. Bloom's long mental orgasm is quite a proper ending for such a bourgeois labyrinth as *Ulysses*. It has neither a beginning nor an end. It jumps at life like a cat at a canary, but the housewife arrives in the nick of time, and the disgruntled cat jumps out of the window and slinks down to the dungheap behind the gashouse by the bank of a slimy river, where it sinks into a fetid dream. In direct contrast to these graveyard antics, proletarian literature, by linking up the individual with the collective, achieves that genuine magnitude which follows the Marxian comprehension of the historical process as a whole.

The Highest Degree of Consciousness

The prime-phenomenon of Marxism is intense consciousness—the highest degree of social consciousness as yet attained by man. Proletarian literature, partaking of this quality, should also be tested by this touchstone. However, a literature that is a rancid hotchpotch of mystic subjective introvert speculation, arbitrary and hallucinatory, is much better suited to capitalist class purposes than one that is animated by a high degree of consciousness. The proletariat is the most advanced class in society, the class destined to bring about the survival and the further development of western culture, and since consciousness points the way to the inexorable march of this class to power, it constitutes in itself the high secret of the proletarian advance. Not so the bourgeoisie: to it consciousness, which the objective circumstances inevitably focus on the class struggle as the dominant aggregate in the social constellation, would be wholly pernicious; it is the dynamite that could blow up its most cherished illusions. Consequently bourgeois literature takes refuge in a flight from consciousness, it finds a haven in the subconscious. Thus the Revolution of the Word can be explained from a Marxian standpoint. The bourgeois ideologues would like to think that they too are revolutionists, so the word-game is initiated, and we are treated to the ludicrous spectacle of grown-up people indulging in the most fatuous and

infantile delusions. These experiments with word-dismembering are of no more value than the well-known experiments of children with flies, yet the bourgeois illuminati take these word-revolutionists quite seriously. In the ultimate analysis the Revolution of the Word is a pretext for indulging in psychopathological orgies; it represents a deep-seated craving for the prenatal stage, for non-being. The vagaries of Jolas & Co. and the necromantic method of producing literature through the immaculate conception of automatic writing are quite proper end-phenomena of a dying class, and of a crumbling hegemony.

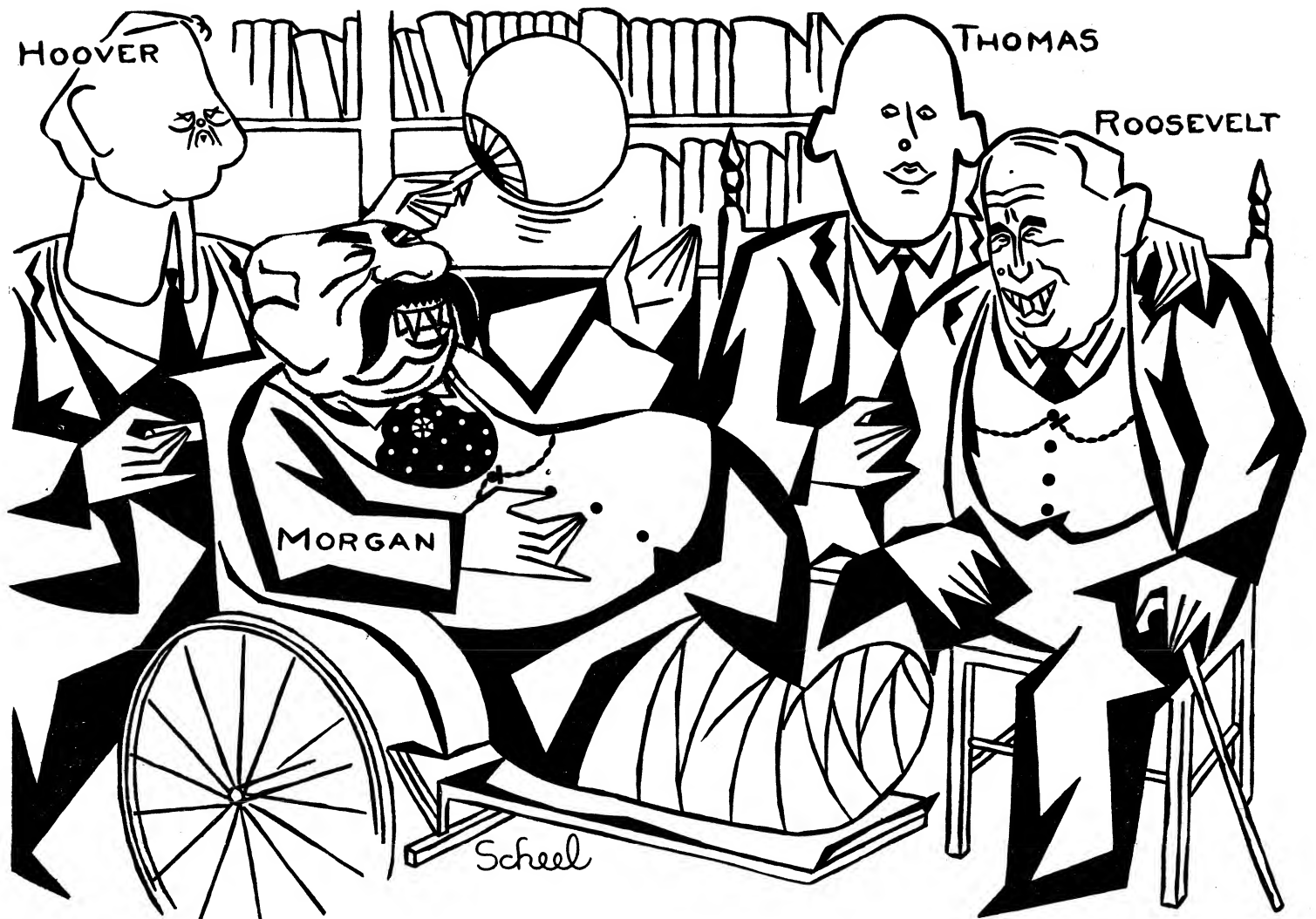
Antithetical Psychologies:

The psychology of the proletariat is in the very nature of its class existence a psychology of production, the psychology of makers, of creators. It is a healthy psychology, in profound harmony with the rhythms of nature. After a rapid process of development we observe in the bourgeoisie of the post-war epoch the emergence of a psychology of pure consumption—particularly in America (in Europe this psychology gained ascendancy much earlier). Here we perceive how a change in the form of the property-relationships—the transition from industrial to finance capitalism—conditions the psychology of a class. Finance capitalism creates a financial aristocracy, whose psychology is that of coupon-cutters, of *rentiers*, of people totally removed from the economic life.

In his book *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, N. I. Bukharin gives an illuminating portrayal of the role which this stratum of the bourgeoisie plays in society: "We have already seen," he writes, "that the class of society here discussed is a product of the decline of the bourgeoisie. This decline is closely connected with the fact that the bourgeoisie has already lost its functions of social utility. This peculiar position of the class within the production process, or, to put it more correctly, without the production process, has led to the rise of a peculiar social type that is characterized particularly by its asociality. While the bourgeoisie as such is individualistic from its very cradle . . . the individualism in the case of the *rentier* becomes more and more pronounced . . . There disappears not only the interest in capitalist enterprise but any interest in the social altogether. The ideology of a stratum of this type is necessarily strongly individualistic. This individualism expresses itself with peculiar sharpness in the esthetics of this class; *any treatment of social themes appear to it eo ipso as 'inartistic,' 'coarse,' 'tendencious'*" (italics mine—P.R.)

In analyzing the bourgeoisie of his time, the American economist Thorstein Veblen concluded that theirs was a psychology of "conspicuous consumption." American critics of the left have been strongly influenced by this thesis, which is undoubtedly true of the American bourgeoisie of Veblen's time. For the present, however, I think his thesis is no longer valid. The psychology of conspicuous consumption is chiefly characteristic of the bourgeois in his prime phase, when he is still an entrepreneur; but with the transition to finance capitalism the industrial bourgeoisie, the entrepreneurs, begins to play a minor role in shaping the ideology of the class: the industrial bourgeoisie now forms the *substratum* of the capitalist class, and generally tries to ape the life-pattern of the upper stratum, the coupon-cutters. The vogue which pseudo-aristocratic manners and ideas begin to enjoy during this phase is extremely symptomatic of this shift; in short, the old straightforward vulgarity of the brutal slave-driver in direct personal control of the instruments of production is now replaced by the sophisticated vulgarity of idlers and poseurs.

In the realm of superstructure this evolution wields of course a powerful influence in determining the metamorphosis of literary ideology, both in the sphere of form and in the sphere of content. The heroes of Frank Norris' novels of industrial life are captains of industry, alive and buoyant with the optimism and vigor of a class still relatively young: they are in constant touch with the actual process of production: they are not coupon-cutters. This is no longer true of the literature produced during the period of finance capitalism. The present asociality, blind anarchic individualism, amorality, are all essential factors of the new ideology, which in its own right comprises one of those internal contradictions of capitalism that operate for its destruction. Consider this statement by T. S. Eliot: "The arts insist that a man shall dispose of all that he has, even of his family tree, and follow art alone. For they require that a man be not a member of a family or of



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Scheel

a caste or of a party or of a coterie, but simply and solely himself . . ." This statement offers us a concentrated expression of the asocial psychology of pure consumption. Herein we see how the cultural representatives of the bourgeoisie irresistibly gravitate towards a complete acceptance of the ideology of that section of the dominating class which is furthest advanced on the road to extinction.

In American literature the transition from the psychology of conspicuous consumption to that of pure consumption took place during the twenties. H. L. Mencken concretely exemplifies this change. The ferocious warfare he waged against democracy, his extreme individualism, his organic inability to think in socio-economic terms—all are indications of the change. Sinclair Lewis militated against the "standardized philistinism" of George F. Babbitt and helped to bring about the individualistic philistinism of the people in *The Sun Also Rises*. George F. Babbitt is a regimented bourgeois, a garrulous booster, social with the hypocritical sociality of industrial capitalism; the protagonists in Hemingway's novel are effete hypochondriacs, cataleptic individualists—the human dust of finance capitalism. The writers of the early twenties fought for sophistication, i.e., for individualistic philistinism. (The Babbitts of the era of pure consumption are generally known as sophisticates.) Booth Tarkington could still describe the plutocrat with relish, with a certain amount of health, but the writers of the late twenties and the thirties, never. To them the plutocrat is a coarse animal; only when he spends his holidays in Southern France, patronizes the arts, and under the influence of numerous cocktails becomes capable of philosophic discourses on life, death, and the immortal soul is he worthy of respect.

Even in the commercial trash dumped by the tons on the market this transition is patent. In the thousands of novels turned out annually the heroes and heroines seem to exist in an economic

vacuum—they all have money, they are all dressed up in the height of fashion, they are present at all the smart events—but where and how they amassed their fortunes is not mentioned. The assumption is that their fathers or grandfathers did well by their children, but this is not allowed to intrude into the texture of the novel.

In England the arrival of the historic moment of pure consumption for the bourgeoisie occurred much earlier, and aided by the nobility and other atavistic feudal elements its assimilation into ideology was quickly effected. Aldous Huxley typifies in himself the position of a writer who has accepted this psychology *in toto*. The characters in his novels, psychic louts most of them, are constantly peregrinating from one country-house to another, forever talking, but under no circumstances concerned with productive work. In *Antic Hay* one of them, a female adventurer, is reclining on a couch and meditating in this profound fashion: "We on the sofas, ruthless, lovely and fastidious." Huxley was ironizing in this passage, but unconsciously he was formulating his own class-position. On the sofa, febrile, inept, entangled in intellectual cobwebs, yet deeming himself exceedingly ruthless, and of course so esthetic (lovely) and sophisticated (fastidious). Nobody works except the lower classes (the servants). Mr. Huxley and his intellectual companions are all coupon-cutters, hence it is not hard to understand why he wrote *Brave New World*. The civilization of the coupon-cutters is in jeopardy, the Nirvana of pure consumption is threatened, and Mr. Huxley, like the good ideologue of his class that he is, hastens to the rescue.

The economics and sociology of the capitalists are Ptolemaic in nature. Once man regarded the earth as the fixed center of the universe, now the bourgeois regards capitalism as the fixed center of economic life for all eternity. Therefore, having accepted this position, the bourgeois littérateur feels free to relegate it to the



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oblivion of axiomatic truths, and begins to consider the brutalities of capitalism as eternal principles of human nature. But, just as in physics absolute distance, unrelated to some specific frame, does not exist, so in literature and all other forms of ideological expression, absolute values do not exist. Proletarian literature is enclosed within the dialectic frame of the dynamic mobility of classes. From that vantage-point it sees man and events in their round, as in a triple mirror.

Fellow-travelers and the Class Line

Since the expulsion of the economic romanticism prevailing in America till the crash in the autumn of the year 1929, American writers have increasingly shown a tendency to think in social terms, turning to the left for ideational substance. It would, however, be the sheerest wish-thinking to suppose that his can be taken at face value as an indication of a fundamental trend. It is quite certain that following the economic interests of their class, most bourgeois writers will swing towards fascism, while only a few, the most honest, the least dominated by delusions, will join the proletariat.

If it weren't for the object lesson of proletarian class-rule in Russia and the resurgence of Marxism all along the front, those writers who did take the final step would have probably sought an outlet from the confusion attendant upon the collapse of prosperity in mysticism or some type of neo-religion. It is precisely the iron dynamic of the Marxian philosophy that effected the apostasy of such writers as Edmund Wilson, Newton Arvin and Granville Hicks. I believe it is a mistake to think that it is the widespread misery and economic chaos that is the chief cause of these writers' espousal of collectivism. The widespread misery and the economic chaos merely impelled them to approach Marxism for a way out; without Marxism this misery and chaos would have simply thrown them into the arms of Mr. Eliot and M. Maritain.

With regard to fellow-travelers a lenient attitude is more or less in order. They cannot be expected to accept completely the proletarian viewpoint in one bound, but caution is necessary. If they make the Marxian world-view their own and evidence a comprehensive understanding of it, they can be counted on to integrate themselves into the proletariat. If they fail to do so, it is almost certain that sooner or later they will desert and re-join the bourgeoisie, as many socialists did during the war. The emotional, romantic approach to Communism is a paper bridge for anyone who wants to cross over into the camp of revolution. Lenin once censured Upton Sinclair for his pacifism, describing him as an "emotional Socialist without theoretical grounding." Only their ability and *willingness* to master Marxian theory will insure their loyalty. The view on the Russian Revolution they adhere to is a good test. Thus we find some fellow-travelers persisting in a pseudo-liberal attitude to the Soviet Union, perpetually deploring "the lack of freedom in Russia." Is it really so difficult to understand that the concept freedom under the capitalist regime is merely formal? "Freedom is the recognition of necessity." (Engels) Everything should of course be done to facilitate a fellow-traveler's assimilation, but once it becomes clear that his bourgeois class-roots are too strong, he should be neatly and rapidly dispatched on the road back, because he will only bring confusion into the ranks of the real militants.

In his essay *The Class Point-of-View* Lenin left us some good advice as to tactics in this respect. "The party of the proletariat," he wrote, "must learn to catch every liberal just at the moment when he is prepared to move forward an inch, and compel him to move forward a yard. If he is obstinate and won't, we shall go forward without him, and over his body."

Communist ideology challenges the morality of individualism, not qua incentive to great things, but as an anti-social incentive, and therefore as ultimately no incentive at all. It opposes the obsession with individual rights, not because right and freedom are anathema, but because it sees them as rights and freedom only for a class implying an equivalent deprivation of rights and freedom for another, and more numerous, class. Here, perhaps, lies its greatest terror for the rest of the world—the terror of a new faith to which men are willing to harness their souls.

MAURICE DOBB

(*Soviet Russia and The World*, Sidgwick and Jackson, London).

SHERWOOD ANDERSON

A Writer's Notes

When I was recently in New York the New York papers were playing up a phase of Waldo Frank's new book on Russia that speaks of the difficulty the artist must meet in a civilization devoted to giving new life and health to workers. I haven't read Mr. Frank's book yet but I intend to. He would agree with me in this—that any difficulty the artist or proseman may meet in a civilization under the dictatorship of workers could easily be capped in any money civilization.

One of the saddest experiences to be had by any writer in America now is to go into the office of almost any American book or magazine publishing house. Lord, what gloom, what deep despair.

Why? No advertising, book sales dropping off, subscriptions to magazines almost impossible to get.

I went about the city, stopping often to listen to young Communist men and women speaking on street corners, and was a bit ashamed of my white suit, my Panama hat, my walking stick. A little girl Communist speaker at Ninth Street and Second Avenue came to me as I stood listening. This at night. "Are you a comrade out of work?" she asked with charming innocence. I swear to God I was ashamed.

The white linen suit, the Panama hat, the swagger walking stick.

"My dear child, men out of work are not rigged out like this."

As for American writers—God help the new man out now with a new book having poetic strength. He'll find restrictions enough, God knows.

Among the young fighting Communists I found poverty, youth, no gloom.

My own feeling now is that if it be necessary, in order to bring about the end of a money civilization and set up something new, healthy and strong, we of the so-called artist class have to be submerged, let us be submerged. Down with us. A little poverty and shaking down won't hurt us and I believe in my own class, the artists' class. I believe in our ability to survive. The world is old. Changes have swept over the world before. If new, worthwhile and significant men are to arise now in America the chances are a hundred to one that they will in any event come up out of the masses. It's in the air.

If the movement to free all men from the rule of money means the submerging of our class, let us be submerged. Down with us. Let's have no starving workers to save us. We'll survive. We'll swim. We will in the long run be healthier and better if we get it in the neck now along with the workers.



"HE WANTED A BONUS."

Herbert Kruckman



"HE WANTED A BONUS."

Herbert Kruckman

JAMES S. ALLEN**AWAKENING IN THE COTTON BELT**

It was July. The crops were being put by. The cotton plant stood almost a foot high, in long freshly chopped rows. Bare-footed Negro men and boys were plowing on the larger plantations. All available hands, not busy with cotton, were on the planters' vegetable patches chopping the earth that had once been black. The sun was hot. Only those who could neither walk nor toil—the very old or the very young—could be seen about the cabins. The countryside was at work.

On the old Savannah Highway a chain gang was also at work. Two white guards with loaded Winchesters and revolvers at their belts, watched the row of Negro prisoners, in stripes and chains, shovelling dirt from the gully. In the slow steady rhythm of the Southern sun the men and boys shovelled out their sentence.

All is quiet on the domain, you would say, just passing through. You see the peaceful-looking cotton patches and the peaceful-looking Negroes at work on them. The mill at the creek is grinding out meal from last year's corn. You see X . . . in the heart of the South Carolina cotton country, a peaceful-looking town—if you would call it a town—with its railroad siding, the one general store and the few cottages. If not for the cabins on the road coming up, you would say that the country looks even prosperous. The crops are progressing fine. Everything is in its place as it should be—the Negroes on the patches, the landowners in their mansions and the chain gang on the road. King Cotton's beard may be a little grayer, but he still sits on his throne—from the looks of things.

We turn off the highway into a dirt road, pass a field of green cotton plants on which there is still no trace of white, and come within view of a three-room cabin. It is larger than usual, but so are the cracks between the crude white-washed boards that form the walls. No shingles cover the board roof. A sixty-five-year-old Negro cropper, his wife, seven children and three grandchildren call this home.

The unemployed son has come from Greenville, bringing a white man with him. We arrive at the dinner hour, when the old man is resting on the porch and his sons are returning from the plowing. The youngsters venture timidly forth to have a better look at the approaching car and then retreat when they see a white man at the wheel. The old man is outwardly unconcerned and shows no trace of emotion as the car draws near the porch and he recognizes his son. We hid the car in the back of the cabin—a strange car and still more a strange white man arouses suspicion in this country. Everyone stands at a distance as Bill approaches his father. The father eyes the son quizzically. A sudden homecoming can bring no good. And there is a strange white man.

"May God bless you, son."

The mother stands in the doorway, a thin emaciated woman, with back humped from years of cotton picking and hoeing. A warm smile and a nod to her son, no hugs, no caresses.

Bill introduces me.

"He is one of us."

I extend my hand. The old man hesitantly, questioningly offers his toiler's hand. It remains limp in mine. He is not quite certain when to withdraw it. It is probably the first time he has ever shaken hands with a white man.

"Have a seat, boss."

The son is impatient with his father. Bill has worked in the city for a number of years and partaken of the new vision offered him by the Communist movement, which has found permanent roots among the Negro workers of the South. He is representative of the new Negro worker, with one foot still in the soil, who no longer cringes before the white man, the "boss" and the "master." It is this new Negro who, aroused to full self respect and unbelievable militancy by the Communist Party, has caused wide-spread alarm among the upper classes.

"He is not a boss, father. Among our people he is a comraide, just like you and me. He is one of us, and that's what comraide means."

The old man takes the lesson from his son with an apologetic smile.

"That's the way we are accustomed here, boss," hhe says, "and I reckon it's hard to break from."

Over the rough board table in the kitchen the words "boss" and "master" begin to wear off. The old man, Bill, the 18-year-old son and myself are having dinner together—from the same table, from the same dishes. There are huge spaces between the floor boards, carpeted with flies. One of the younger daughters, bare-footed and in tatters, stands by the table and drives flies from the food with a fan. The meal consists of hot cakes, corn bread, hominy, lard gravy and fatback in honor of the guest. The younger son hesitates to take another piece of fatback, but the old man encourages him.

Old Man Johnson is a cropper. He farms 25 acres of land, 15 to cotton and 10 to corn. By tacit agreement with the landowner, he is to turn over half his cotton and corn at the end of the season for the use of the land. From the remaining half the landowner is to take his payment for the food he has advanced during the season. Johnson may not take his crop to market and sell it himself.

Mrs. Johnson explains from the stove:

"Last year all we had was some corn after the pickin'. We picked our cotton and were cartin' it in and there was the boss on the road. 'Bring it all around to my barn where it's dry,' he says. We took in the peas and potatoes—we had them last year—and there he was again: 'Around by this way, Alec, up to my barn. You got no place to keep it.' If it wasn't that I just dumped a good part of the corn right in my kitchen before the boss had a chance to see, we wouldn't have had even that for the winter."

The old man points to his barn through the doorway. The walls have given way on two sides and the roof forms a crazy triangle with the ground.

"It's been that way all year and will rest that way next year. The boss says he wont fix it and wont let me neither. It's that way on all the farms. Then when we're taking the crops in he can say to bring it all over to his barn, where it will be dry—and we'll never see it again."

There is great hatred for "the boss." He is the son of the owner, and overseer of a dozen of the smaller plantations in the section, each having about five or six cropper families, and of two large plantations employing about 100 farm laborers each. The planter is an old man, suffering from some chronic ailment that does not permit him to get about. His son is the whip in his hand.

Old Man Johnson has neither plow nor mule. He gets the use of plow and mule from a small white landowner down the road, in return for plowing his land. The sons do the plowing, two days on strange soil, one day at home.

The Old Man is chopping peas for Mr. T. All the Negroes, finished with putting their own crops by, are at work on the vegetable patches of the big boss. Old Man Johnson is sick, his back pains him. He chopped peas in the morning, but he fears the afternoon ahead of him under the hot sun. The old lady tells him to sit pretty, to just stay at home. Mr. T. Pays 25 cents a day for chopping peas. If someone does not report, his son stops around to see why. His word is law in this country.

A bell tinkles in the distance.

"They're off to work," mutters the old man. "Time for us to be going."

He trudges wearily away down the dirt road after his two plowmen sons.

"And how do you manage to feed yourself and your children, Mrs. Johnson?"

There are the food advances from the planter. Every week \$2.00 worth of food as follows: 12 pounds of flour, two quarts of rye, ten pounds of fatback, a pound of coffee, two pounds of sugar, 2 pounds of lard. This must feed the whole family for a week. There is no money in this peasant economy. Even the 25 cents a day made at chopping peas or cotton is paid in the form of food

or credit at the general store in X . . . which is owned by the big boss. Every so often a cropper will stealthily sell a chicken, if he is lucky enough to have one, or some vegetables, if he was permitted to plant a vegetable patch of his own, and thus obtain a little change.

And for the winter? The part of the crop that is left after the landlord takes his—for the Johnsons the pig that they are trying so carefully to fatten on the limited amount of fodder and refuse. It may be that when winter comes the pig may no longer be theirs but resting in the barn of Mr. T to make up for that part of the debt not paid for by the cotton and corn. Mr. Johnson's mule went the way of Mr. T's barn last year when cotton sold at 10 cents a pound.

"And what will you do this winter, Mrs. Johnson when cotton sells at 5 cents a pound?"

The old woman shrugs her shoulders. All the winters of her life she has passed in this county and her mother was a slave to the parents of Mr. T. There were times when at Christmas, there was cash among the tenants, paternally doled out by the planters in a shylock settlement for the year's work. But there was none last winter and there will be none this year. Winter hovered like a voracious demon over the cotton country.

Old man Johnson, Bill and I hit over the back roads, away from the white men's cottages, to visit reliable kinsmen and friends. Whole families of black people, laboring on the soil, many mouths to feed on starvation doles. Up near the mill there is the big plantation worked by laborers—men, women and boys—100 of them, at 25 cents a day for the men and 20 cents a day for the women, huts thrown in, with board at the plantation commissary out of the wages.

There is an ominous murmur among the Black Peasantry. Twenty-five cents an acre for chopping cotton—a full day's work! And didn't the three Williams kids chop seven acres of cotton for Mr. T in four and a half days and only get one dollar altogether for it? Can one expect more than 25 cents a hundred pounds for picking cotton, usually a source to be banked upon for some credit and cash for the winter months? And what will the winter be like? And what is to be done?

All this is only whispered after Bill has assured them that I am a different kind of a white man, one of them, a "comrade." And Old Man Johnson had said:

"Let me tell you something about him. He ate with me at the same table and slept in my house. And we was just comfortable like his color and mine were the same."

Then the mumbling becomes more intense, with veiled meanings and many questions. I am surprised at the evidence the croppers' words and especially questions gave of the deep penetration of Communist propaganda into the very heart of the agrarian South, where, I am sure, Communist literature has never reached before.

In the heart of a wooded section we come across the chain gang camp. The gang is still at work on the road and the Negro trusty cook has no objections to our investigation. There is the bunk wagon, a steel cage on wheels, with eighteen steel bunks to which are chained 21 prisoners every night. In the middle of the wagon is a basin for refuse. The human cargo in the cage is wheeled from one place to another in the county to work on the roads. Differ with your landowner and the sheriff will take care of you! The domain of Mr. T is a petty kingdom, embracing some 300 cropper families, with its own courts of justice and laws of servitude.

At dusk, we take Old Man Johnson to see the doctor at X. I drop the old man and Bill down the road a bit, for it would not do at all to have themselves seen in the company of a strange white man. They knock at the back door of a cottage. The doctor, one of the retainers of Mr. T, spends a few minutes examining the old man in the barn—he would not permit a "nigger" into his house. He gives him some drugs and the account of Alec Johnson is charged three dollars for medical service to be taken out of the labor that sends pain shooting through his back.

Old Man Johnson, he of the older generation whose life touches at either end the struggle against an old slavery and the struggle against a new, does not accept his lot complacently. He is silent in the car as we drive him back to his cabin. But that night, in the circle of intense croppers gathered about his kitchen lamp come to meet the black man from Greenville with a new message and the white man who eats from a black table and sleeps on a black bed, he finds new uses for words out of the Bible to simplify the newer language of his son.



Jacob Burck

"GET THAT HUN—I MEAN RED!"

Two weeks later, when the crops were all put by, the landowners stopped all food advances to their tenants, until cotton picking time in September. For six weeks the black peasants, and the few white croppers of this vicinity, sat by without the regular weekly food supply while the cotton bolls opened under the hot sun. Is it any wonder that during this time, the Negro toilers of Sumter County found a new standard for the judgment of their fellows—is he with or against the *Southern Worker*?

When cotton picking time came Mr. T and his associates paid 25 cents a hundred pounds—50 cents for a day's picking, from sun up to sun down. And Mr. T's storehouses were overloaded with the bounteous crops and his barns saw many new animals.

When the fields of the cotton country were hardened with frost, Old Man Johnston continued to mix his biblical idioms with the newer language of young Bill, and new methods for fighting starvation were being evolved.

Fearing fraternization the United States War Department disbanded and disarmed the two regiments of Negro infantry and the two regiments of Negro cavalry stationed in the South and distributed the black soldiers among the white camps to act as labor battalions. Counties in the Alabama Black Belt passed new criminal syndicalist laws. The Southern press peddled rumors of "Negro uprisings." Deep-felt alarm pervades the white upper classes and "Uncle Toms" of the South.

A new spirit pervades the Negro masses of the South, stiffened by a thoroughgoing, altho slow, transformation in the attitude of the Southern white workers towards their black brothers. The Georgia crackers are being replaced by revolutionary native white workers and even more rapidly are the "Bills" taking the place of the "Uncle Toms." Camp Hill—its victories, its defeats, its mistakes—is becoming the property of the rural masses throughout the Black Belt, born and planted in the black soil by the city workers. Bill received his industrial experiences in the period of Gastonia and Scottsboro and returned to his home soil to impart its import to the Negro peasants. He carried back with him a vision of a liberated Negro land, stretching from Virginia to Arkansas like a sickle, and the unalterable conviction that the white revolutionary workers would not only grant their support for this struggle for the right of self-determination but would also be in the leading cadres.

The deep devastating misery of the crisis winter and the starvation summer in the South are engendering major struggles. The widespread boycott of cotton picking by both white and Negro toilers last autumn—they refused to pick cotton for 25 and 30 cents a hundred pounds—foretells new mass struggles at 1932 cotton picking and "settlement" time. Bill, Old Man Johnson, the white cropper down the road are forming a union for common struggle against starvation.

NEW MASSES



Jacob Burch

"GET THAT HUN—I MEAN RED!"

AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR

Leading writers and scientists in Europe and the United States have issued a call to the peoples of the world to initiate a great struggle against imperialist war. From his home in Switzerland, Romain Rolland has urged men and women of all countries to prevent war, which may break out tomorrow and "devour civilization." Pointing out that "the whole of civilization, the whole world is in danger," Rolland petitions "all peoples, all parties, all men and women of good will" to support and attend the Peace Congress which will meet in Geneva on August 28, there to unite all forces which are opposed to war, to the cannon merchants and to "all the mob which is intriguing to fish in bloody waters."

The committee which is organizing the anti-war congress has its headquarters in Paris. It includes Albert Einstein, Henri Barbusse, Upton Sinclair, John Dos Passos, Heinrich Mann, Bernard Shaw, Maxim Gorki, Madame Sun-Yat-Sen and others. In its name Rolland has issued the following appeal:

"In a few weeks—in a few days—the fire will devour everything. It will be a nameless horror, the murder of civilization. The whole of civilization, the whole world, is in danger.

"Wake up! We make an appeal to all peoples, to all parties, to all men and women of good will. It is not a question of the interest of one nation, of one class, of one party. All are concerned. All are in danger. Salvation cannot come except by the hands of all. All have to take action. Stop arguing. Unite, all of you, against the common enemy. Down with war!

"We call you to attend a large congress, which will be a powerful manifestation of all parties against war. We summon everybody, from whatever social horizon they come: Socialists, Communists, trade-unionists, anarchists, republicans of every shade. Christians and free thinkers, all the pacifist organizations, war resisters, conscientious objectors, all independent individuals and all those in France and other countries who are decided to prevent war by whatever means.

"We beg them to appoint, as an urgent measure, representatives to an organizing committee of the world congress, which will fix as soon as possible the place, the date and the rules of the congress. We cannot lose another day.

"We do not have to make a plan of action in advance. That would mean hampering the liberty of those we are summoning, and it is they who in the congress will freely present their different plans and finally try to come to a decision as to common action. What we want is to raise an immense wave of opinion against war, whatever war it may be, wherever it may come from, whom-ever it may menace.

"We want to enable the will of the people to roar out for all that is wholesome in humanity. Let them compel the unworthy and equivocal weakness of the governments to choke the monstrous instigators of war—the profiteers of massacre, the armaments industries, the cannon merchants, their clientele of provocateurs and unscrupulous press, and all the mob which is intriguing to fish in bloody waters.

"Muzzle War!"

Another member of the international committee organizing the Geneva congress, Albert Einstein, urges that "the peoples must take the problems into their own hands and refuse to manufacture arms, refuse to transport arms and refuse to serve in military organizations."

American intellectuals and workers have responded to the call of Rolland, Einstein and their collaborators by organizing the American Committee for the World Congress Against War, with Theodore Dreiser as its chairman and Malcolm Cowley as its secretary. The committee's tasks are to send to the World Congress Against War, which meets in Geneva August 28, a delegation composed of workers, artists, writers, intellectuals representing the determined will of America to fight war; to back this delegation with a mobilization of public opinion expressing itself in the press, in the pulpit, over the radio and in organized demonstrations; and, on the basis of the action taken at the Geneva Congress, to build a realistic uncompromising American peace movement, cooperating actively with the sane and determined forces of peace in other countries to the end that the war-makers may be exposed and check-mated on every front.

In carrying out this program, the American committee is helping to raise a delegation which will adequately represent this country at the Geneva Congress. A recent appeal issued over the signatures of Theodore Dreiser and Malcolm Cowley pledges the committee after the Geneva congress to "continue the work of uniting all forces in a popular campaign against the war that must be stopped if civilization is to survive."

The committee requires funds to defray the expenses of sending an American delegation to the Geneva congress. We urge our readers to give every possible support—political and financial—to the committee. The building of a powerful movement against imperialist war is one of the most important tasks confronting American workers and intellectuals.

Recently Friedrich Adler, secretary of the Second International, addressed an open letter to Romain Rolland attempting to discredit the Geneva congress on the grounds that it is inspired by Communists. As was to be expected, the press of this country gave more space to Adler's letter than to Rolland's appeal. It was equally to be expected that the leaders of the Second International, always ready to assist the imperialist war-makers in every way, should attempt to discredit a genuine attempt by leaders of world thought to mobilize public opinion against imperialist war. But

this effort of the Second International to impede the Geneva congress is bound to fail. The world knows that Romain Rolland, Heinrich Mann, Albert Einstein, Upton Sinclair, Sherwood Anderson, Devere Allen, Bertrand Russell, Robert Lovett, etc., are not Communists. If they have roused the ire of the Second International it is only because these intellectuals have seriously dedicated themselves to the struggle against imperialist war. Honest persons of all groups, aware of the imminent war which threatens civilization, will support the anti-war congress.



"THAT'LL TEACH HIM TO RESPECT THE LAW!"

Walter C.



"THAT'LL TEACH HIM TO RESPECT THE LAW!"

Walter Quirt

V. J. JEROME

TOWARD A PROLETARIAN NOVEL

Seldom in the wake of capitalist industrialization have class conflicts followed with the speed and intensity of the recent textile strikes in the Piedmont section of the South. At the very moment when the bourgeois stargazers were forecasting a limitless golden expanse for capitalism in the newly industrialized South, as if in fierce mockery, a wave of strikes began to sweep the textile mill regions of Tennessee and South Carolina, destined to leave written an inspiring chapter in the history of the American workers. The textile barons of New England, in transporting their industry to a backward region, had hoped to impose unresisted exploitation upon a freshly proletarianized, unorganized, native hill-folk that knew nothing of strikes and Communism and "such foreign notions." But they merely succeeded in evidencing that the sanctuary does not exist to which capitalism can flee from the conflict in which it is doomed to go down.

The drama of Gastonia has still to be written. The first great struggle of the mountain-side proletarians, the ruthlessness of the mill-masters aided by State and Church, the villainy of the reactionary labor-leaders, the solidaric stand of black and white workers for the first time welded by the fire of their faith in the new union, the martyrdom of Ella May Wiggins, the destruction of the workers' relief camps, the sentencing of the revolutionary strike-leaders—these cry aloud for expression.

There have been some ballads and songs in the folk manner about Gastonia. There has been a work of fiction by Mary Heaton Vorse. But not until quite recently has there come forward a novel of high distinction to deal in considerable measure with the discontent and struggle of the Piedmont weavers.*

The strikes of the Southern textile workers were militant. By far the greater number, and certainly those that have become historic, were led by the National Textile Workers Union; and where the leadership was of the old reactionary unions, the workers were constantly attempting to force the leaders to action. There was an urge among the strikers that carried their desires even beyond the demands they had officially put forward. Yet, alongside of these more advanced workers that were consciously following revolutionary leadership, there were considerable sections still in the first stages of proletarian development. They had been gathered from their mountain homes with glowing promises by the agents of the industrialists and brought down to the lowlands to be the hands inside the mills and the idle reserve outside. The sudden impact of a life of smoke and clangor bewildered them. The harsh, dehumanizing exploitation; the enslavement to whirling monsters of wood and steel; the poverty, the insecurity, the squalor, the degradation, brought upon them, who were not yet linked with the broad revolutionary movement, a helplessness in which the mind was yet too torpid for class consciousness and the fibre still undeveloped for class action. In their misery, some looked to the christian-heartedness they felt must sooner or later awaken in their masters; others placed their faith in the noble gestures of a few enlightened high-born; still others beheld in the new industrialization with its hideous city life, a weird aberration, a nightmare that would soon pass. These last looked nostalgically to the mountain, to their erstwhile homes and plots of land.

It is the confused, struggling, half-conscious effort to pass from this type of emerging proletariat to the full-grown militant working class, which is represented in *Call Home the Heart*.

Fielding Burke, or rather the authoress assuming that name, comes from the petty-bourgeoisie. She is a friend of the working class, a sincere friend, but, in this book still not wholly of it. Vehemently though she may deny it, her steps towards the workers are still a descent. Her Ishma, the heroine, it is true, is of farmer stock. She is introduced to us in the opening sentence of the book as a child of "the class of burden-bearers." She is made to leave her native mountain and go down into the midst of the mill workers, live with them, mingle with them, suffer with them, struggle together with them. Yet she

remains essentially the visitor, the outsider. A daughter of toilers, she is limned, as might be a vestigial heroine of feudal times, a creature of haunting loveliness, with an air about her that is more of the Forest of Arden than of a mill town in South Carolina. "Your walk," says Virginia, wife of the textile manufacturer and loather of everything working class, "your walk is perfection. And you don't even know what eurythmics are." Her way among the mill people is of one that is among them yet not of them. It is not a mill hand that is her companion in the tense days of strikes and meetings, but the polished physician, the dilettante radical, Derry Unthank, *enfant terrible* to his bourgeois circle, yet destined to remain forever encompassed by that circle. He brings his services as physician to the ailing and the injured in the strike, and she her services as nurse; but together they speak of the workers as "they." Squalid and drab is the mill life, but Ishma threads her way through it along a silvery path that constantly shapes itself for her as she goes, until it leads her away from the mill town, away from the struggle, back to the mountain to which her heart hears itself called.

Ishma's desertion represents her fundamental lack of faith in the capacity of the workers to effect their liberation. Ishma came with a feeling of serving the working class. She was a humanitarian "plying her way among the strikers," ministering to the sick. Ella, the worker, understood this when she spoke to Ishma of participating in the actual struggle: "What you been doin' is just patchin' around . . . This'll be main business. You'll be where what you do counts." In her healthy proletarian way this mill girl recognized that the fighter in the workers' ranks, feeling that he is in the struggle of his own class, does not look on himself as a humanitarian, as one come to serve. Essentially, "coming to serve the working class" is not coming to align oneself with the working class. It is, notwithstanding its assumption of humility, a euphemism for the patronage of the bourgeois toward a class he considers abject and helpless. Whatever there is socialistic about such service is of the utopian mould. Its guiding principle is an abstraction, such as human perfectibility or the advance of knowledge, given an omnipotence to enlighten by its irresistible effulgence the understanding of all men. Such a principle postulates for present-day society the existence of a unified mankind that is steadily growing outward from the enlightened few until all of humanity will be embraced. In such a utopian scheme of things what place has the tumultuous combat which is the inevitable result when class is pitted against class? Communism? Yes, says Ishma; yes, says Unthank, as they sit raptly listening in the meeting hall to the beatific expoundings of social ultimates in the implausible oratory of the Red strike leader, the comrade from the North. But when the moment comes for the local speakers, who would begin the discussion of the practical issues of the strike, Unthank, regretting "that there had to be more talk that night . . . drew Ishma back into the shadows away from the gathering." Again, when Ishma's militancy flags, it is not to mass enthusiasm that she turns for revival, but "Out in the yard she looked up, at her old friends, the stars, for strength to go back into the room." It is significant, too, that the author has omitted to bring in, except by reference, the wrecking of the strikers' relief camp—a moment charged with the bitterness of the struggle at its fiercest. To have done that scene, the pen would have had to be turned into a sword. For that, Fielding Burke, it seems, was not yet ready when she wrote this book.

We come now to that moment in the story which symbolizes, more than any other, the pangs and difficulties in the way of class awakening among the semi-proletarian elements from whom Ishma springs.

From the first moment that the National Textile Workers' Union assumed strike leadership in the South, it carried on, as an integral part of the class war, the struggle for black and white solidarity among the workers. This was unlike anything that had ever been attempted in that region. Whatever organizing had been carried on by the American Federation of Labor or the Socialist Party had been with an open or covert policy of Negro segregation. The manufacturers were determined to check the "nigger lovers."

**Call Home the Heart*, by Fielding Burke. Longmans, Green and Co. \$2.50.

The Southern textile strikes constitute one continuous history of terror by government and Ku Klux Klan against black and white workers demonstrating solidarity. The basest prejudices were whipped up by press and pulpit. The lynch spirit was roused.

In the novel a militant Negro striker, Butch, is singled out deliberately by the mill owners and their agents to be made an example of. He is to be "taken for a ride" by a lynching party. Ishma learns of this and decides to effect his rescue. From this moment all the inner conflicts in the make-up of Ishma come into fierce play, mount, and fall in catastrophe.

Ishma does not, as would any class conscious working girl, rouse the workers to set out in a mass against the lynchers, but dashes off alone in the night, an "angel ob de Lawd." There is heroism in her act; but what an opportunity lost for that heroic solidarity which is the only force destined to put an end to lynching! Ishma, the humanitarian, reasons, however: "That would mean a fight with the lynchers, more men killed, and the poisonous spread of hate." Her way is different. She brings back the stunned and bleeding Butch, and, as Gaffie, his wife, comes rushing into the house and flings her arms about the neck of the saviour, Ishma, the embracer of humanity, disembraces herself from the woman with the black sweaty arms and strikes her with her fists to the ground. Earlier in the narrative, in discussing the Negro question with Unthank, Ishma said: "I'd like to see a black race keeping to its own lines of life, intuitive, rhythmic with nature . . ." This poetry and Ishma's brutal act against Gaffie are at bottom one and the same; and, given the moment, the first will not fail to show itself as the second.

And yet Fielding Burke's heroine does not withdraw from the workers' struggle a skeptic and a scoffer. Not the masses, but her own frail self has she weighed in the balance and found wanting. She is the faint-hearted, the runaway; they are the enduring, the battlers to the end.

Fielding Burke belongs to the category of American writers that have been profoundly stirred by the economic crisis. But of them all, none has gone farther than she, perhaps none as far. There are those who, like Dreiser, have come forward to endorse publicly the election platform of the Communist Party, but who, in their writings, belong still to the old order. Fielding Burke has more than endorsed Communism in her novel. A writer of mystical poetry all her life, a "mountain spirit," she comes to Communism reverently, stands before it in adoration. She is a voyager gazing wonder-eyed at the shores of a newly found universe. It is Ishma who is the main character of the drama, but not she is the protagonist. Greater than Ishma is one who is organically less related to the story, but who hovers as the overtone when the book is laid down. It is the Communist strike leader, "the comrade from the North."

The book has naturally brought down upon its author the wrath of bourgeois critics. Elmer Davis, for instance writing in the *Saturday Review of Literature*, rails throughout a lengthy review which he calls "The Red Peril" because a work that "is, for the first half of its considerable length, one of the finest of American novels," should have been lost to art in the second half through its advocacy of a cause—Communism. Needless to say, had the cause been that of the Blackshirts, or of Czarist emigres, our knight-errant of letters would have made no such rush to the rescue of the violated Muse. Nor does Ishma's return to the hills, which, significantly, Elmer Davis refers to as a "relapse into art," console our critic. For he knows that the novelist's heart is not called home with her heroine's.

Another critic writing, instead of a review, an incensed epistle to the publishers, has this to say:

"I am writing this letter after reading it, in violent protest against the circulation of any such sentiments as that book contains. This is not the usual sob sister letter against a sex story or what might be termed 'trash.' The book I refer to is not trash. It is beautifully written, well put together, is a worth while picture of a woman's life. But, on page 284, almost two thirds through the book, is begun the most gripping kind of propaganda. Gripping because the reader is already 'sold' on the story—fascinated by the characters, and will in greatest probability finish the story after that . . . I will, you may be sure, be very careful not to give this book any publicity. I will do what I can to see that it is removed from all the rental libraries in . . . I don't

raise a hue and cry. I won't mention its name any more than is absolutely necessary. I know only too well the average fiction reading mind. But I still have a faith that you will stop it . . . Won't you please remove from circulation that instrument and mouthpiece of communism—Fielding Burke's *Call Home the Heart*?"

The tirades are tributes. "Call Home the Heart" belongs to the pioneer novels in the literature of the American working class. Not yet the certain, militant voice of the full-grown proletariat, vague still, at times incoherent, even wavering, it nevertheless resounds from a chord of clear sympathy with working class aspirations, even to the farthest reaches.

And, withal, it is a work of a high literary order, indicative, one may say, of the superior culture to be in the superior social form reached for by Fielding Burke.

Johannes Becher

THE MAN SITS HOME

*The man comes home,
Shuts the gate.
He would like to shut himself up,
Before he faces his wife—
Just a little while.*

*The kids have stopped playing
In the yard.
Without greeting them
The man comes home.*

*In Berlin
In London
In Warsaw
Chicago*

The man comes home.

*The man stands by the window,
The man knows:
Those who have no work are legion.
None falls from heaven;
The earth has none—*

No work.

*In Berlin
In London
In Warsaw
Chicago*

*No work.
(The hands are idle,
They might just as well lie in water,
Going soft,
Lying quietly . . .)*

*The coat wears thin and thinner,
The bread gets scantier.*

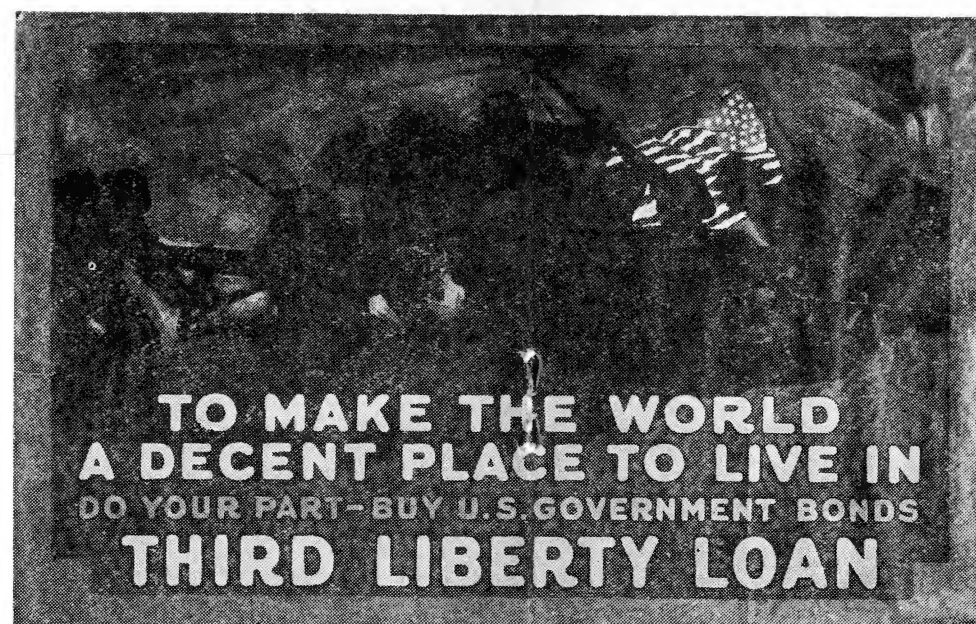
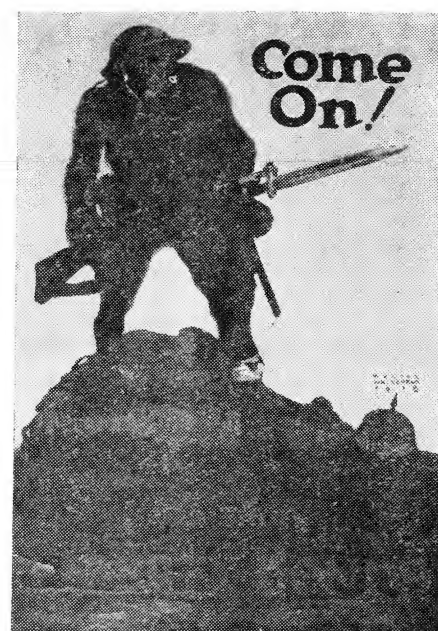
*The wife sits home.
The husband sits home
Without work.*

*In Berlin
In London
In Warsaw
Chicago*

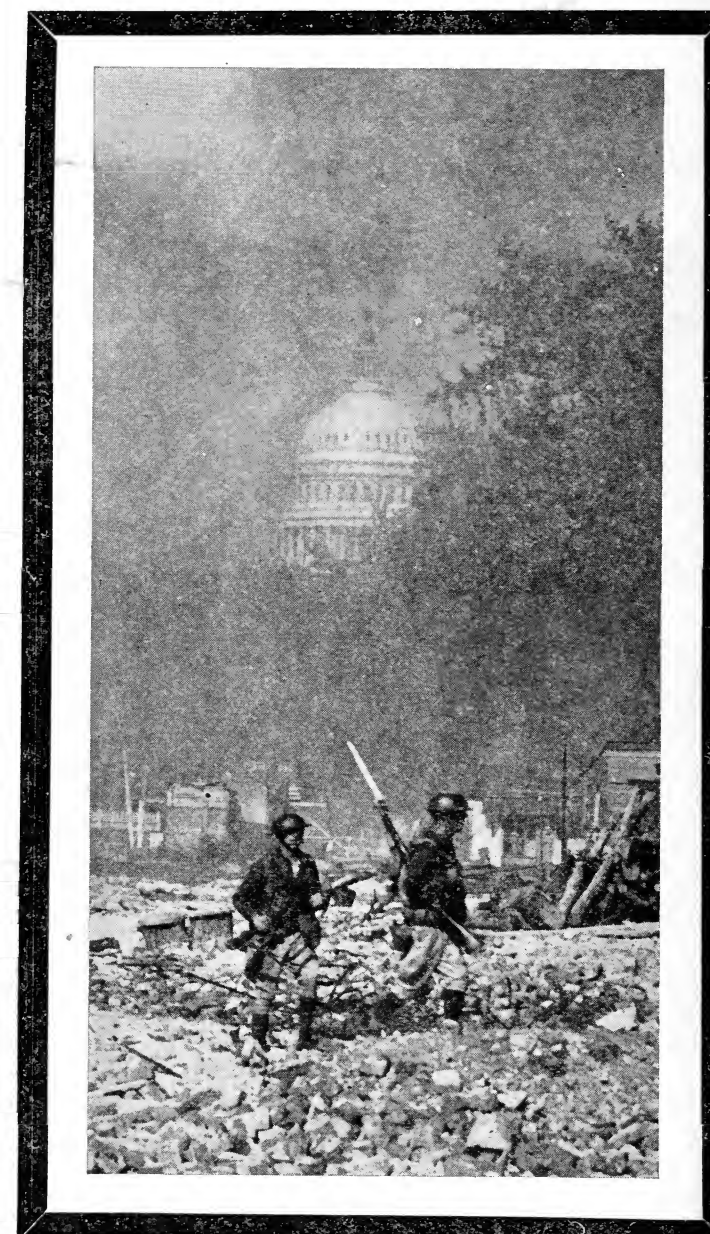
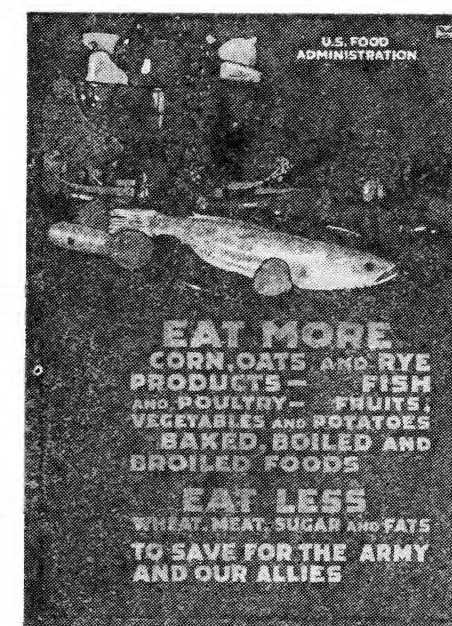
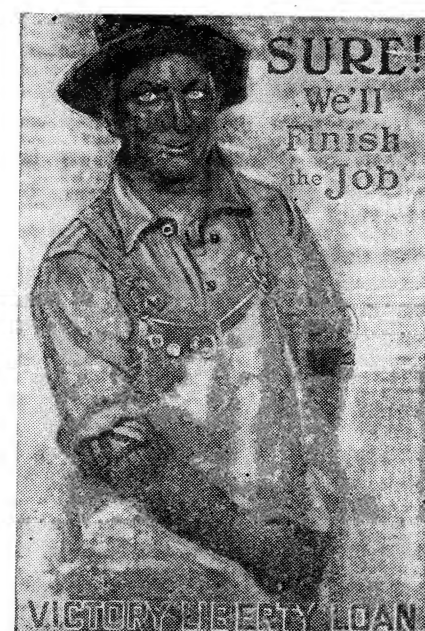
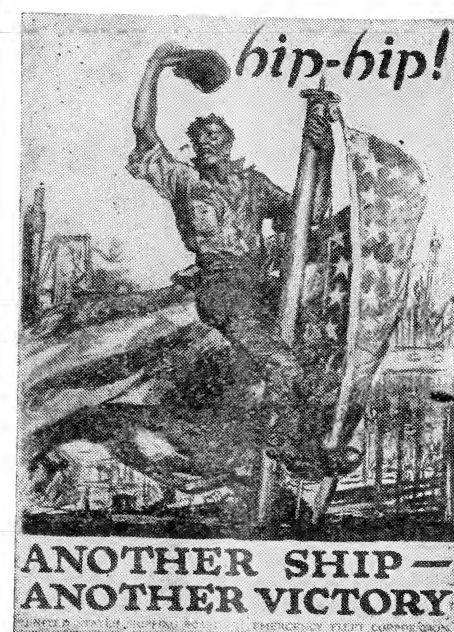
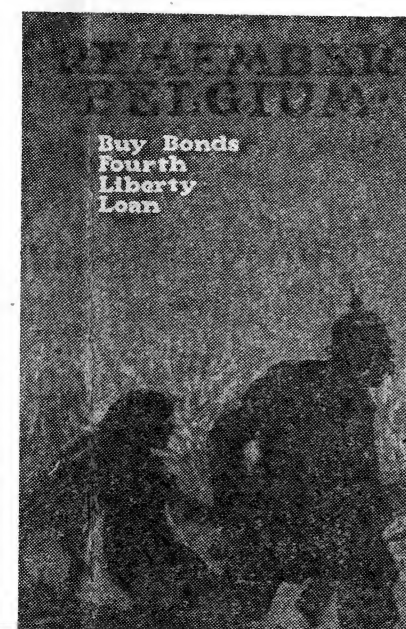
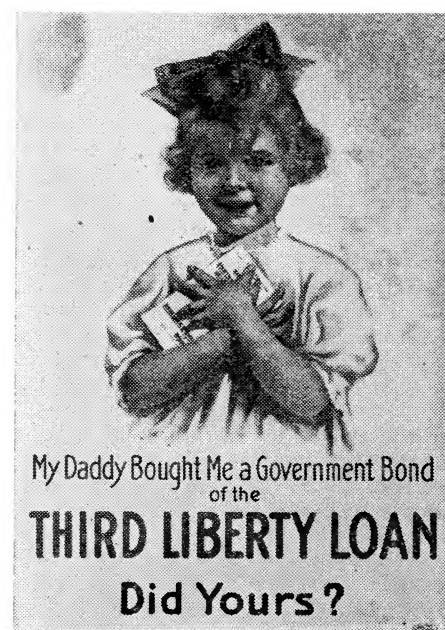
*The man sits home
Without work.*

Translated by
F. R. Miller and Philip Rahv

This Church
is behind
The UNITED
WAR WORK
CAMPAIGN
For the Boys
Over There



This Synagogue
is behind
The UNITED
WAR WORK
CAMPAIGN
For the Boys
Over There



1917
|
1932

MOISSAYE J. OLGIN

THE SOUL OF NEW RUSSIA

The loud-speaker fills the dusk with buoyant music in the Park of Rest and Culture. The Moscow River splits into thousands of spectrums as it bends its back under the impact of motor boats. Leaf-laden trees fit strangely into a harmony of throngs of humans, laughter, music, spruce pavilions, striking declarations making their insistent appeal in white letters on strips of red cloth, electric lights, bud-covered bushes, and mist. It is a spring evening with all the strange moods of the "white nights" of the north.

Fifty thousand young men, fifty thousand young women, in groups, crowds, squads, couples. This is their rest day. They are free, light-hearted. They have come to amuse themselves after the strain of four days' labor.

But how different their amusement! How unlike Coney Island, the Prater of Vienna, the Luna Park of Berlin, the Tivoli of Copenhagen! There is a spiritual quality here. There is a restraint growing out of an inner culture. There people do not shout. Yelling would be considered insane. The very term "rowdiness" is hardly used any more. Masses of men and women are joyous but disciplined, happy but well-mannered, vivacious without being crude, in love without being vulgar. Their very amusements testify to a new culture.

They play football, but many more attend the exhibition of new books just opened in the "culture base" of the Park. The tennis courts are crowded but more so the *reading courts* where you can lean back in a wicker chair and inhale the fresh outdoor air while reading your favorite author. The bathing beach is also crowded but there are many more people in front of the singing platform where a sun-browned blue-eyed bare-footed devil of a Comsomol kid accompanied by a pianist is teaching the crowd a new proletarian song. A few instructions, a few flashes of the girl's white teeth, a few bars of the song—and a chorus is formed, of people who never saw each other before, and a rich stream of organized voices pours forth into the twilight.

Who are those people? Workers. Sons and daughters of the revolution. They have learned to behave like free human beings. They have not known capitalist slave labor and culture. They are raised on *physical* labor permeated with *spiritual* values. These, combined, form the substance of the class struggle in the present phase of the social revolution.

For thousands of years "learning" and "toil" were identified with different classes. The ruling class possessed the means and the leisure for the acquisition of knowledge. The oppressed class, creating profits for their masters, looked up at them as rich not only in material wealth but also in things of the spirit. This meant a double oppression. By and large the ruling class was not even cultured; it confined itself to *paying* and *maintaining* a group of culture-makers called the intelligentsia who pretended to work for "mankind" thereby doubly deceiving the masses. The workers received crumbs from the masters' table until they revolted and began the class-struggle which is the foundation of the new culture of the oppressed. This was the case of the proletarian struggles of the early nineteenth century which laid the basis for proletarian culture.

The Bolshevik revolution is eliminating this double-entry book-keeping by eliminating social classes. The bourgeois as a class is becoming extinct. The kulak class is in the process of liquidation. The working class is the only active growing class and it is changing the peasantry, by means of the collectivized farms, on the basis of proletarian values. The working class both rules and toils. This gives a new dignity to labor and a new swing to intellectual work.

Labor is "our" labor, performed for the benefit of all toilers. Labor has acquired a new meaning. It has become dynamic. Its drudgery is aglow with enthusiastic effort to do a good job in order that the Plan may be carried out and the common goal achieved. Its monotony is made creative by a constant search for the new. Russian factories and farms are laboratories for inventions by the workers themselves. The hum of industrial machinery is accompanied by the strenuous activity of the workers' mind.

The man at the bench is born master and toiler, mechanic and administrator, coal-digger and editor, weaver and philosopher, tractor-driver and judge, love-maker and novelist, baker and playwright. There is still a certain division of labor; there are still the old intellectuals inherited from the bourgeoisie. But they are being relegated to the back-ground. The front seats are taken by the men and women from the bench who have mastered intellectual work.

How they learn! Here there are no spoiled sons of the bourgeoisie who look upon a college diploma as a social distinction and an asset in business. Nor are these sons of workers trying to use education as a stepping stone to the master class. This is a young liberated class bent upon acquiring knowledge in order to secure its newly won freedom and lift itself together with all the toilers to a new and hitherto unknown height of culture. Here knowledge is a weapon. Learning is a breaking of chains. Culture is a challenge. This young class has no slaves. It exploits nobody. When it has secured a new human life for itself it has secured it for all human beings.

There is a burning avidity for knowledge, a devouring of books, an orgy of learning. Gulp down your lunch in fifteen minutes; devote the remaining part of your lunch hour to collective study. Work at your bench seven hours; spend three more hours daily in the metallurgical institute until you have learned all there is to know about metals. Dig copper ore six hours a day; invent an epoch-making improvement in the smelting of copper; spend every free hour perfecting your invention under the supervision of scientists. Become a historian while you are operating a crane; qualify for party leadership in agriculture while working as a tractor-driver.

Millions learn, everywhere, under all conditions. Gigantic energies are applied to purposeful work. Released creative forces are carrying the masses forward at tremendous speed. The masses hardly recognize themselves. They are spellbound by their own image. But there is no time to gaze in the mirror. Life is too absorbing; tasks are too immense. The most characteristic trait of the new life is that one is not conscious of oneself. It is always "we."

"While transforming the old world we are transforming ourselves." A powerful revolution in human relationships, in attitudes, in human values is taking place. "Matter" is no longer vulgar; "spirit" is no longer holy; possession is no longer a sign of distinction, not even the possession of knowledge. Work for one's class is the badge of honor; devotion to the common task is the basis of distinction.

Petrov has completed a quarter of a century as a stoker—he is a veteran of labor. Stepanov has been leading his shock brigade for a year without missing a single hour—he deserves honorable mention. Kirillov has completed his engineering studies in thirty months and has invented a new machine—he is a hero of labor. But Kirillov isn't superior to Stepanov or Petrov. The man who edits a magazine is by no means "better" than his comrade who lays bricks. The proletarian professor of the Communist Academy is doing work that is different from that of the molder, but even this difference is not fundamental. Professor and molder are not far apart. The molder often undertakes to control the professor. The latter has not yet forgotten how to handle the ax or the spade or the lathe. Together they build Socialism. They are of one class. And they do not brag. They are modest with the consciousness of the dependence of each upon all and all upon concerted effort. The ego has been curbed by the emergence of the collective body as a colossal creative whole. The collective body overshadows individual attainments; these are recorded and praised; but they themselves assume the aspect of manifestations of the collective. The "I" pride is merged in the "We" pride. The "We" grows stronger every day.

A new class, having undertaken to "equal and outstrip the bourgeoisie" in the field of culture, is remaking the latter after its own image and creating a new culture. "There isn't a thing Bolsheviks cannot achieve" may serve as a slogan for the new

proletarian culture. The world is divested of mystery. The universe cannot strike fear into proletarian hearts. Armed with science, the worker will change the world. Therefore he cannot be sad. He has no misgivings. He loathes decay. He considers swamp-lights as hideous as the swamp itself despite their alluring brilliance. He handles wounds of the spirit like wounds of the flesh. He is all impact, all dynamics. He knows no hesitation. He despises "doubts." He will rather err and correct his error than "meditate" in indecision. He is extremely realistic, extremely practical, but for this very reason he has a width of horizon denied the bourgeoisie. He sees the outlines of the future. He has discovered the laws of development of all human society. He is therefore universal. At the same time he knows his own place in the sum total of the creative collective.

This of necessity finds expression in fiction and poetry, in the

theatre and in music, in painting and sculpture. The very term "fiction" is abhorrent to the Russian worker. Not tales that are fictitious, unreal, untrue, but the facts of life seen through class imagination and co-ordinated in a skilful ("artistic") manner with a view to organizing the reader's mind in the direction required by the class struggle. Not material for amusement but armament for battle. Not harps vibrating in the breeze but trumpets in the storm, arrows thrust into the future, showing the way, mobilizing for conquest of new worlds. Not mental trifles for the aged who never knew youth, but things of historic importance for a whole youthful class changing the world.

There is still a struggle on between this new proletarian culture and the remnants and the worshippers of the old. But the old recedes—to the museums and textbooks. There are still hybrid creatures to be encountered here and there. But the new is winning all along the front. Victory is assured.

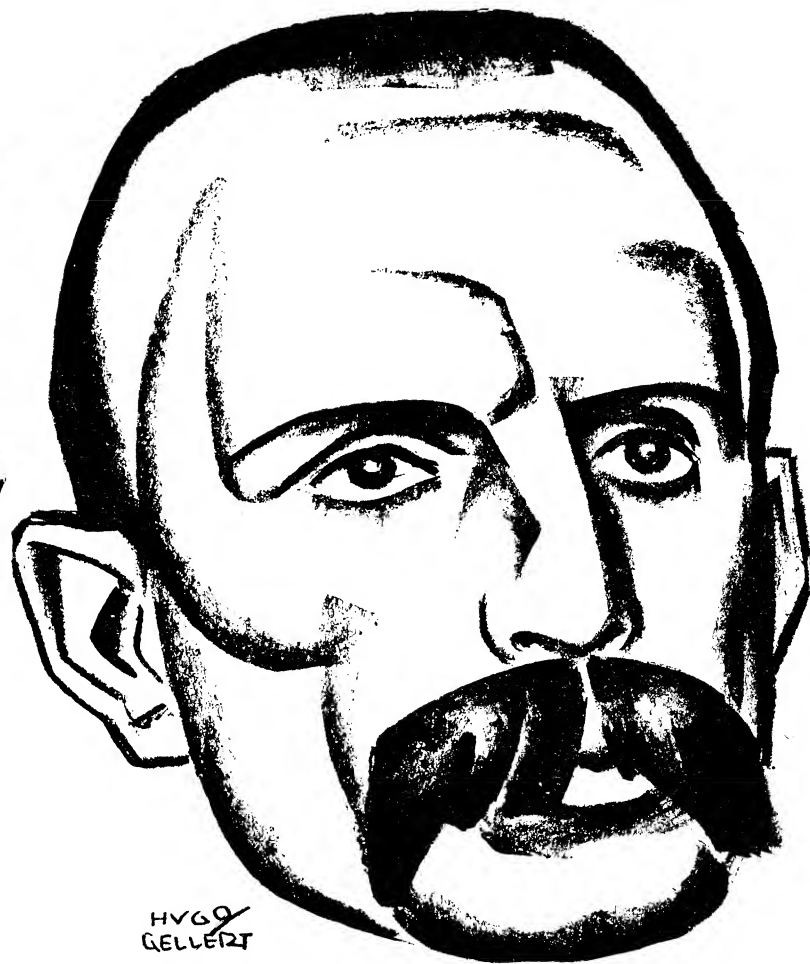


SACCO-VANZETTI

August 23, 1927

Friends and Comrades, now that the tragedy of this trial is at an end, be all as of one heart. Only two of us will die. Our ideal, you our comrades, will live by millions; we are beaten, but not vanquished. Just treasure our suffering, our sorrow, our mistakes, our defeats, our passion for future battles and for the great emancipation.

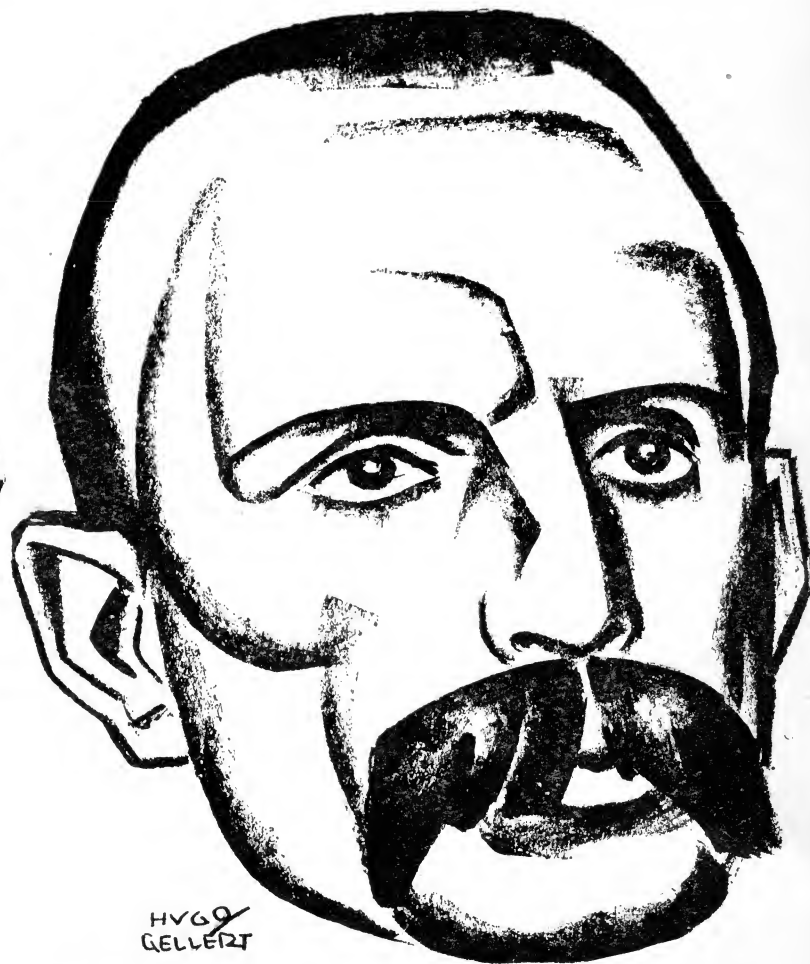
BARTOLOMEO VANZETTI—NICOLA SACCO



HVGG
GELLERT

SACCO-VANZETTI

August 23, 1927



HVGG
GELLERT

SACCO-VANZETTI

August 23, 1927

S. FUNAROFF

FIRE SERMON

A worker whose dusty clothes smelled wet and gassy like an excavation, whose clodboots were caked with drymud, shook his fist furiously. A sudden shot of voice like a sledgehammer banged against cobblestones.

"Cah-pit-ah-leests! . . . They bloodsucker-rs!
Wor-rker-r or-rganize! . . . We fight!"

He began sputtering, his mouth boiling full with words. His words full with grievance. His greenswollen neckveins purpled. Dark eyes raged in his reddened face. His excited body trembled.

Slowly, he simmered into a tense, nervous silence.

An uneasy silence, a high humidity of emotion was felt amid the crowd of workers,—the barometer of a storm.

No happy, no contented faces here.

Only laborers with grim faces, feeling anger, feeling sorrow like rain packed into stormclouds, packed to the explosive bitter point, dangerously packed like dynamite eager for the first dangerous spark or lightning blow to—
Power!

Down with Capitalism!

The Communards, they are storming heaven!

A damp gust of March wind
Whirls and scatters papers.

And the hot, critical July days!—
tense wireless bristling with flashes,
stammering, stuttering,
awaiting what code,
what code to translate
Capital, Famine, Predatory War,
into what dialectic odyssey
the machine guns' riveting shall inscribe—
the Leatherjacket fatally indite?

And when the thunderheads hammer,
the palaces reverberate,
the napoleonic columns fall;
the cracked plaster of paris Narcissus
drowns in his fragments.

The Thorthunder speaks:
Workers! Soldiers! Sailors!
We are the riders of steel storms!
We are the fire-bearers!
Ours the heritage of the first flame-runner
racing up the steep dark slopes
a flambeau in the night!
Created and creator of fire!
We are the riders—
Budenni-men!—
riders of steel stallions,
the kinetic synergy of factories
snorting flambent plumes,
charging,
rushing up the tracks beacon-eyed!

And the scarlet ships of space
wing time's fires
cataclysmic bear
earth's heirs
the communists with battle shouts
rumble over the skyways,
scatter cannonades of stars,—
flowers of life and death,
flowers of revolution
rocket amid acrid clouds!

The Thorthunder says:
(rumblin crumblin)
Da!
Da Da!

All Power to the Soviets!

The spring rain blows over the steppes.







In October
lightning ripples in the windwaved wheat—
great streak of silver whistling scythe!
And tractors bloom in the wheatfields!
They rumble,
they crumble the earth to their powerful wills.
They speak:
Gigant!

Overhead—
the soft sunsetwinds blow rosegold odors
twilightly descend with their first young star.
Over the bridge strong hands on wheels and levers skim.
Over the bridge trains sew and bead red stars
weld through fire and iron
five years!
detonate electric songs of speeding lights!
A blow torch simmers sparkles
and the Leatherjacket welds
weaves from the silken cloth of golden sun
the workers spun
red stars over the bloody waters below.

Red coals foam and toss in torrents
in galvanic waterfalls of the Dnieprostroi,
and the Dnieper sows her banks with rubies.
There spring up the socialized cities of red giants!
Workers of Magnitogorsk with her huge blast furnaces
write in flame,
through fire and iron,
steel statements of steel deeds:
armored trains of revolution
electrodynamic steel drilling through black rock
dynamiting tunnels
mining blackgold ores!
Subways without christbeggars
whose blind eyes beseech piaculatives!
While the bursting sun flings from chaotic flame-pits
the synthesis of new worlds . . .
Far into the night, far into the ages,
the burning worlds whirl and shine . . .
. . . Citytowns . . . worker palaces of art and culture . . .
. . . Workers! Across transition belts of time and space,
tools in hand,
we mould the human race,
we lay the base,
assemble and rivet bolts and parts
of marxist machinery,
and build mighty structures,
higher bonds of social union . . .
. . . classless society . . . Gigant!
We are at once the makers and the made,
the mechanic and the mechanism of marx-leninism!

Here are the blazing windows of iron mountains
in an electromagnetic sunset.
These are the heights men reach.
Still higher—
the Communard soars like a propelled comet,
until the earth is small tinder for such a blaze of space!

Yes the world is burning and the stormwind's big bellows fan
the flames and the hammer pounds stronger and stronger the fist
voices the bolshevist and the bitter heart leaps in answer Thalatta!
Thalatta! and her all-conquering legions of horsemarmes shout
and clash and clang their armor and the scarlet seas surge exultant
upon new shores flowers of revolution red and gold bursting
the magniloquent red battlehorses of plunging plumes in the
thundering wind paced with the lightning roar a song of flame
and the world in the embrace of the flaming flood and the hammer
heard clanging clanging upon an anvil clanging and shaping world
october and the cry and call of Defend the Soviet Union! Onward
to the Dictatorship of the World Proletariat! and they march and
demonstrate and bright banners of faces cheer thorthunderclap-
plause! and they shout through the streets of the universe yes
and the sun like an executed head falls and the whole sky bleeds
dripping over church and skyscraper and bloodied arms like ham-
bers strike stars forge new worlds shoot upwards yes!



Herbert Kruckman





MYRA PAGE

HOMECOMING

"Peace—Peace!" Marge and Ruth were jerked out of their sleep as a shrill voice broke in on the night's stillness. "The War's ended—Peace! Peace!" Snatching a wrapper Marge ran to the door. "Boy, here, here!" She held out her coppers for the paper.

Quaking with the chill, she sat on the edge of the bed to read the news while Ruth and Gertie, huddled up, the bedclothes pulled around their shoulders, listened with strained faces. The children on the pallet whimpered, blinking at the lights.

"Thank the Lawd it's over," Gertie murmured and dropped back on her pillow.

"Come on Ruth, let's dress 'n go outside," Marge laughed hysterically. "I'm too restless to sleep."

Lights shone dimly from the grey shacks that lined the street, doors banged as millhands joined the rapidly gathering crowd, pulling on jackets and shawls as they ran.

"Hurrah, the war's over!"

"The slaughterin' 'll stop 'n our boys come home."

"We'll have a real Christmas this year!"

Villagers pounded one another's backs, shook hands all round each time a newcomer joined them, threw caps into the air, and paraded the narrow, dirt streets singing and hurrahing until the stars paled in the greying sky and it was time for a bite to eat before going to the mill.

The super and foremen raced from one department to another, scowling angrily. "You all gone crazy? Sure the war's ended. But these here orders got to go out!"

After the super left, Miss Jones slipped over to Marge to whisper, "What you know, thar's some that ain't glad this war's over! They been makin' a pile of money, the mill has. 'N it warn't *their* sons across!" She spit viciously into a rusty pail standing nearby.

Marge caught a glimpse of Bertha's sad face as she wove in and out among the frames. Poor Bertha! Thar'd be no home-comin' for her; her man la yover thar, blown to smithierins.

"We're sailing the end of this week," Bob wrote in shaky zig-zag lines, "and should be home by March." Marge sang at her machine. She had Bertha over to supper and made her a chemise for Christmas. When Bertha wept on her shoulder, "Why did the Almighty let it happen?" Marge felt guilty in her own happiness.

The mills, banks and business firms closed for half a day to greet the returning Greenville boys. Once again flags flew, khaki figures tramped, bands played martial music, flaming speeches were made. These boys, (sons of farmers, mill workers, doctors and small business men), had won the War for Democracy! They were heroes. Let them ask the best that America had to offer, nothing was too good for them!

"Bob!" Marge's vision of his thin, limping figure, his crooked smile, blurred. "You've come home."

"Lil' Marge Yah, I've come home."

* * *

"So Uncle Mat' broke down 'n went to spend his last days at his son's farm in Georgy? That's too bad." Bob, his second day back was still catching up on the news. "'N what's happened to Tom?"

Immediately the entire table ceased eating, staring at him in a strange way. The two boarders, excusing themselves hastily, went outside.

"You see, Tom opposed the war," Marge began.

"Tom brung disgrace on us all, that's what!" Gertie blurted out. "Ma allays said he would. But"—her voice broke, "I never expected to have a jail bird in the family." Billy and Sam reddened, looked down at their hands.

"Doan you dare say that bout Tom!" Marge thundered. "He ain't no ordinary criminal."

"Marge, for goodness sakes, keep your voice down!" Ruth gasped.

"Wal, I ain't ashamed of Tom, if the rest of you is. He done what he thought was right. He's got convictions 'n the government put him in jail for it."

"Convictions or no convictions, he's in jail, ain't he?" Gertie demanded. "'N if they find it out at the mill, they'll turn us offa the hill."

"Let 'em," Marge answered. "Jest let 'em. I'll give 'em a piece of my mind."

"Lotta good that'll do us," Ruth grumbled. "Marge, this time Gertie's right."

Bob shook his head. "Wal, I ain't so sure." Later he asked Marge, "Just what is it Tom believes?" They talked far into the night.

"Now the war's over, why doan they let him out? Marge questioned anxiously. "If he was a richman's son they'd not keep him locked up like that."

"If he was a rich man's son, he'd never got took up in the first place."

* * *

Bob was restless to be at work, "But wait awhile," Marge begged, "till you get rested up a mite; 'n I can feed you up on grits and gravy, 'n take that peaked look off'n you. Younr lungs 'n side ain't right yet, the doctor says."

"But honey, I can't be a-livin' offa you. You look like a rest would set you up right smart, yourself."

"I'm all right, now you're back." Her voiced dropped. "Lil' Roberty's goin' went hard with me."

He put his arms around her. "Doan you grieve, honey. Soon as I'm well again, 'n workin' steady, we'll have another to take Roberty's place." Marge didn't answer. The old doubts assailed her, altho challenged now by a longing for motherhood which Roberta had awakened in her.

"Soon I'll be back at weavin' 'n we can start out fresh, in four rooms of our own . . . Gee, Marge, it's good to be back! Those fifteen months were the longest I ever spent." Only fifteen months! They looked at each other. Where were the carefree youth, the starry-eyed girl of a brief year and a half ago?

"Marge!" Gertie's whining voice sallied forth from the kitchen, "time to be a-fixin' supper."

It was evident, even to Bob, that he couldn't do a day's work at the mill. As Ruth remarked, even odd jobs around the house tired him out. What troubled Marge more than anything else was that he didn't seem to improve very fast. Then, he was changed. The old Bob, with his ready laugh and boisterous confidence was gone. In his place was this quiet, brooding creature who wandered about the house as though looking for something he couldn't find.

She'd come upon him sitting with his hands hanging down between his knees, eyes staring ahead. "The war's done somethin' to him—somethin'." Coming up close behind him, she slipped her arms across his chest and pressed his head against her breast. "What's it Bob, what you a-lookin' at?" she whispered. Turning, he wormed his head against her body like a small boy. "The things I seen over thar Looks like I can't forget 'em."

Sometimes he would break down and sob, clinging to her, gasping into the horror of the time he'd plunged his bayonet through a fair-haired lad who'd resembled his younger brother. "His eyes haunt me. His cry rings in my ears." He told her of Will, the Mountain boy at Camp Lee who had been driven to suicide because he was hone-in' for the hills 'n didn't hanger to fight in a conflict that 'taint our war. Of bomb raids, gas attacks, of birds of prey stalking the fields.

"Honey," his grip tightened until she held her breath from the pain, "if I could jest be sure it was for somethin'. But it 'pears like over thar I lost all my belief in what we were fightin' for. I'd have come away, if I could. But thar warn't no way, 'n you had to keep killin' or get killed."

Marge, as shaken as he, tried to comfort him. "You did the best you knew how. Now it's all over 'n behind you. You're back. We got each other, 'n we gotta helpen our people here."

"Yah, us mill folks gotta fight for our rights. If I can jest get my strength back. Seems like they done for me."

"Doan say that. It takes time, but you're perkin' up a lil' every day When you spose we'll hear 'bout that government compensation you been writin' about?"

"Aw, the govern-ment doan care 'bout us no more, now the fightin's over!"

"But at the parade they said....."

"They said! Then what for they put so much in the way between me 'n Burke 'n the others what got hurt over thar, 'n the the pay that's due us?"

"I dunno. Reckon it takes time, or somethin'."

"Somethin' is right,—somethin' we mill hands ain't got. Pull."

* * *

Billy and Sam were persistent in their questioning of Bob and his two buddies, Burke and Walter, "Ah, go on, tell us more about what it was like, fightin' in France. Was it sure-nough like the movies shows it—?" The family was still grouped around the cleared supper table. Various neighbors had dropped in.

Bob's fingers drummed restlessly on the red cloth. "Thar ain't nuthin' worth tellin'."

"Ah, Brother Bob," Sam wheedled, "doan act tight-mouthed. What about the night of the gas attack when you 'n Burke—"

"Do leave 'em alone," Marge urged, "can't you see they doan wanta talk?"

Walter pulled irritably at his empty right sleeve. "If you wanta be filled up to the guzzle with war stories, go in town to the American Legion. Thar's plenty boys thar who lap up this hero stuff. Us here ain't the stomach for 'em."

"They sure is modest ones," Ben Tilson's wife spoke in an admiring stage whisper.

"Naw, that ain't it, Miz Tilson," Burke gave an embarrassed cough. "Beggin' your pardon, ladies, but—" suddenly he exploded, "me'n my pals here is plum shet to hell of the war 'n war talk."

"Let's change the subject," Marge looked around uneasily.

"Tell you what," Billy, unheeding, addressed his young brother, "what you say in a coupla years we join the army? Oughta be more to it than jest workin' at the mill."

Abruptly Bob lifted his head. "All right, Billy, Sam 'n all of you, we'll tell what war's really like." He spoke sternly. "Maybe you young fools can larn some sense in time. Tho I doubt it."

Toward the end Burke described the unrest and near-mutiny in his battalion because of bug-infested rations, brutality of the officers, and senseless wasting of lives. "More'n one struttin' Napoleon near got shot down—by mistake you understand. 'N soldiers wisecracked between theirselves, 'I loved this country; but let me outta this war 'n I'll never love another'."

"I was in a detail carryin' prisoners-of-war to the rear. On the way we got a lil' friendly, tho it was contrary to orders. One fella, about Ben's age an size offered me a smoke. He could speak a bit of English, too."

"Why you fight?" he asked me. 'You workman, me workman. Why fight?' He told me he was a textile weaver, from a place called Saxony. Jest think, a mill hand like us!" Bob marveled.

"By gorry!" Ben exclaimed, "you mean?"

"Yah," Bob nodded wearily, "it was all lies 'bout them bloody, man-eatin' Huns. I seen a lotta other prisoners, 'n once you got to study 'em, close-like, they turned out to be just common folk like us . . . Now this one I was tellin' you of, he showed me a picture from round his neck of his wife 'n lil' boy." Bob gulped. "'N he said, 'I'm glad I' a prisoner, no more fightin'.' 'N he asked me again, 'Why workmen fight each other? For their rich men! Workmen should stand together.' Then an officer come up, 'n we didn't get to talk any more. I never saw him again.'"

His listeners talked this over.

"When you come to think of it, what we got out of the war?" Ben ruminated. "Us here on the hill is bad off as ever, with talk of wage-cuts flyin' round."

"I tell you what we got," Walter spoke bitterly. "Bob 'n Burke got bad lungs; 'n me, I got an arm missing' outta the war. 'N thar's a new crop of millionaires outta the war. That's what we got."

"The mill-owners sure musta made money. Look at the new places they bought down in Floridy. You seen the pitchers in the papers? 'N all the new mills what went up."

"That thar war for democracy," Walter continued, "it was one rich man's war 'n poor man's fight." This saying spread from hill to hill throughout the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama. "Yas-sir, it was a rich man's war 'n a poor man's fight."

"The next time they wanta war," Bob frowned intently at Billy's perplexed face, "they can go fight it theirselves."

"Democracy me shirt-tail," Burke bumped his chair against the wall, "they sure can count me out."

"John Nelson was a-tellin' me," Ben spoke cautiously, "that thar's a rich man over to Atlanta what says thar's only one more war a-comin'. That's between the poor 'n the rich. A new civil war."

"Wal," Walter also made to leave, "when it comes, I guess me 'n Burke 'n Bob 'll know on what side to fight."

Gertie threw out her hands. "You doan know what you're sayin'!" Burke stared down at her.

"Yah, when it comes, I guess we-all 'll be ready."

* * *

The following Saturday Marge was given her time, and Gertie also.

"Drat the bossmen's excuses, they ain't foolin' me none!" Marge pulled nervously at her sister's arm. "Jest 'cause Bob ain't strong enough to work reg'lar, they want a family in this here mill house what can supply more hands."

"That ain't all," Gertie mopped her eyes angrily. "They ain't overlooked Bob's bitter talk 'n your part in that thar walk-out last year. Now you see what trouble you all brung on us."

Marge turned away impatiently. "If our union'd lasted, they'd not be able to do this so easy!"

"That union! A fly-by-night it was, like a black crow . . . Now we're turned offa the hill, whar'll we go? Whar'll we go?" The older woman looked around helplessly.

"Aw Gertie, leave off. I for one am plum glad to be shet of this hill."

After a family consultation it was decided to move out of the state entirely. 'Billy had heard that wages were pretty fair at Charlotte, s on Monday the household began the trek northward.

The Winston who lived next door to their new home at Charlotte in Borders Village proved to be friendly. The first evening the entire family of eight came over for a visit, and the small dining room buzzed with mutual questioning and relating of experiences on various hills.

Suddenly Ted Winston clammered to his feet. "By gorry, I plum forgot the meetin' down at the union hall."

"Union?" Marge queried.

"Yah. Ain't you heerd about it? We got some or-gani-za-tion, with headquarters right here in Charlotte."

"Is that so!" Bob and Marge exchanged glances.

"Sure as Mike. It's some strong, too. I reckon as how forty thousand in these here two states belong. It's called the United Textile Workers of America."

"You doan tell!"

Ted Wilson hitched up his trousers preparatory to taking his leave. "When we got more time I'll tell you all about it—how we organized, 'n the union come 'n said to jine up with 'em 'n we did. This here ain't no fly-by-night, it's a real union."

"Uh-huh". Each syllable came out with characteristic emphasis, as only a southerner can drawl it. "I reckon," Bob and Marge agreed, "this Saddy, after work, we all'll go down to the union hall 'n sign up."



Ryan Walker

In Memory
of

RYAN WALKER

American Revolution-
ary Cartoonist

who died in Moscow

June 22, 1932



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BOOKS

"The Iron Heel": 1907-1932

"The Second Revolt was largely the work of Ernest Everhard, though he cooperated, of course, with the European leaders. The capture and secret execution of Everhard was the great event of the spring of 1932 A.D. Yet so thoroughly had he prepared for the revolt, that his fellow-conspirators were able, with little confusion or delay, to carry out his plans."

But the First Revolt—when did that occur, and what were the events leading to it? The whole story, told by a contemporary, can be found in the Everhard Manuscript, *The Iron Heel*, which was discovered seven centuries later, when socialist governments existed throughout the world. Everhard was the most advanced of the American Socialist leaders in the early years of the twentieth century A.D. As early as 1912 he realized that revolution alone could overthrow the despot America oligarchy. But it was not until after the imperialistic war that the radicals saw the impotency of legal measures and turned to the only way out. The proletariat put up a valiant fight when the First Revolt—the Chicago Commune—was precipitated in the fall of 1917 by the fascistic Iron Heel and their Black Hundreds; and although the revolutionists were defeated, many of their leaders escaped to reorganize the forces of the workers for the Second Revolt which was international in character and which took place in 1932 A.D.

This is the manner in which Jack London, in his novel, *The Iron Heel*, written in 1907, attempted to predict the development of the class struggle in the following quarter of a century. His novel contains a number of curious parallels to the outstanding events of the past twenty-five years. It describes an electoral defeat of the Republican party in 1912; an imperialistic war in the early 'teens of the century; a revolution in the fall of 1917; a world crisis in the early thirties. Of course, the events are not paralleled in detail: the Grange and the Socialists win the election in his novel instead of the Democrats; the War, between America and Germany, is averted by a general strike; the revolution occurs in the streets of Chicago instead of Moscow . . . However, it correctly predicted certain general historical tendencies: the rise of fascism, the falling apart of the British empire, the India revolt, and the attempts of the Japanese oligarchy to confiscate the Asiatic market.

It seems obvious from these facts that *The Iron Heel* could never be classified as a utopian novel. It differs vastly from the numerous tales which depict ideal states of the future. This difference becomes very clear when we contrast the book with the outstanding examples of our Utopia Americana. In William Dean Howells's *A Traveller from Altruria*, for instance, we are shown glimpses of a beautiful civilization based upon most of the utopias from Thomas More's to William Morris's. Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* has been highly praised as a socialistic masterpiece and is based upon the belief of the salvation of mankind through the development of industry; but it paints a completely unconvincing picture of the transformation of capitalistic society into a flawless commonwealth; this is accomplished in a most blissful manner by the fraternization of antagonistic classes in a national party.

The Iron Heel, on the other hand, was grounded upon fact and based its predictions upon the class struggle as interpreted in the light of historical materialism. Moreover, London did not base his novel upon outmoded literary works but upon the history of the class struggle up to his time. Thus, the actions of the plutocracy, which force the legally-victorious workers and farmers to revolt, recall the class struggles in France in the middle of the nineteenth century; the Chicago revolution is reminiscent of the Paris Commune of 1871; the incident of the arrest of the Socialist Congressmen is somewhat like the Haymarket episode of 1886; even terminology from the Russian Revolution of 1905 is employed in the story. In addition, many of the minor events are taken from actual strikes or labor struggles which occurred just before the novel was written. Finally, there is a great resem-

blance between the character of Ernest and the personality of London himself—plus other qualities which suggest a further resemblance to certain leaders of the early American Socialist party.

The Iron Heel was the first American revolutionary-proletarian novel. It was probably the most advanced American radical document of its time. As a matter of fact, it was condemned by the Socialist party for its advocacy of what was then called the "cataclysmic" theory of the class struggle.

Although London is remembered chiefly as the leading representative of the red-blooded school of American letters, he was also the first revolutionary author in this country. His early writings include *The People of the Abyss* (1903), which describes poverty in the great English metropolis; and his essays like *Revolution* and *How I Became a Socialist*, which express his revolutionary point of view.

London died at the age of forty, just before the period of trial and test in American radicalism—i.e., the entrance of the United States into the World War, the Revolution in Russia, and the red hysteria of 1919. Exactly what his attitude would have been at a time when many of the Socialist intellectuals became rabid Chauvinists is rather difficult to determine. However, in a document printed in the *Overland Monthly* after his death, we learned that he believed the War would exert a great cleansing effect upon the world. Then, too, as Upton Sinclair has pointed out, he had also been duped by "the efficiency of oil engineers" in Mexico and had written a series of articles for Collier's magazine which "caused radicals to break out in rage."

London resigned from the Socialist party in the early part of 1916. His statement that he was dissatisfied with the lack of militancy and revolutionism in the party would seem to be confirmed in a conversation which is reported by his wife.

However, in the last years of his life he seems to have cut himself off from practical revolutionary activity. Whereas the later life of John Reed marks a steady progression toward revolutionism, London seems to have retreated from it in his last years. We are therefore forced to conclude that the material which his active life furnished for his stories and which created his popular literary success, led him to sever his connections with revolutionary activity and eliminated all chances of his becoming the Ernest Everhard of the American proletariat.

ALAN CALMER

The Politics of Disillusion

Rebels and Renegades, by Max Nomad. MacMillan. \$3.00.

Max Nomad is the pseudonym of a political emigrant from Europe who has lived in the United States since the war. Nomad is an old-time anarchist who played an active part in the anarchist movement in half a dozen European countries. His book gives a general picture of the revolutionary movement during the past fifty years in terms of the careers of seven leaders and misleaders of the working class. Each man is made to symbolize some political group and a vivid account of their activities is given. Nomad seems to have an enormous reading and personal knowledge of his subject. The reader will find a well-documented array of facts which are interesting and valuable to any student of the revolutionary movement.

Cynically, and with much gusto, Nomad writes about the revolutionary past of many renegades. However, he has a soft word for the idealistic but ineffective rebel—Malatesta—the Italian anarchist leader. Nomad points out that anarchism was mainly confined to economically undeveloped countries, and that its ranks were composed chiefly of impecunious declassed elements whom Marx once referred to as "a gang of declassés, the dregs of the bourgeoisie." Further, Malatesta himself, after sixty years of anarchist theorizing and propagandizing confessed that "we (the anarchists) had no practical program that could be applied after a victorious insurrection."

Nomad traces in some detail, through the person of Philipp Scheidemann, the career of the German social democracy—from Marx to Hindenburg. This is the party that surrendered its revolutionary program to German imperialist expansionism. It has continued during the past fourteen years to be the best pre-

server of the bourgeois *status quo* against the coming German revolution. Perhaps nothing better illustrates the corruption that characterizes all social-fascist parties than a declaration made in 1931 by Solmann, one of the men at the head of the German Socialist Party: "The most important thing is to *keep what we have*, and to remember that the words of Marx to the effect that the proletariat has nothing to lose but its chains are no longer correct."

There is next a very fair portrait of Briand, the ex-socialist who broke the French railway strike of 1910 by mobilizing the workers for military service and threatening them with court martial if they refused to work. Nomad points out the irony of Briand being awarded the Nobel peace prize. It was Briand who was instrumental in having Poincaré elected president of France in 1913. He was prime minister under Poincaré when the latter gentleman and Déclasse, the French ambassador to Russia, played their active parts in the business of bringing about the World War.

Then there are the careers of Mussolini, who up to 1919 was putting forward the most radical demagogic demands; of Pilsudski—his counter-revolutionary coup d'état, his slaughter of minorities, his torture chambers; and of MacDonald and his many betrayals of the English working class.

Nomad's picture of Trotsky views the whole Trotsky episode simply as a struggle for power between Trotsky and Stalin. Nomad overlooks the fact that Trotsky's fight with the Russian Communist Party involved large economic and political issues such as the rate of industrialization, the collectivization of agriculture "socialism in one country," etc. On these points Trotsky was incorrect.

The last man discussed in this book is William Z. Foster who is pictured as a pioneer in the revolutionary movement in America. Nomad adds that the Communist Party of the United States

is drawing into its ranks "the most vigorous, combative, and enthusiastic of the young workers and intellectuals."

Nomad's book contains many useful facts for the student of revolutionary theories. No fact, of course, can be un-Marxian. It is the context in which Nomad places these facts and the implications that he draws from them that are un-Marxian. The book rests on a political thesis which, if examined in the light of Marxist-Leninist criticism, turns out to be a reactionary, petty bourgeois philosophy.

Nomad is a follower of J.V.K. Makhaysky, a Pole, the founder and theoretician of "makhayevschina," a peculiar petty bourgeois anarchistic theory. This doctrine, which arose in the early '90's, had a short-lived success in Russia and Poland about 1900, especially after the defeat of the first Russian revolution in 1905. The principal works of Makhaysky who wrote under the pen name of A. Wolsky, are "The Bankruptcy of 19th Century Socialism," and "The Mental Worker."

The core of "makhayevschina" (as Makhaysky's teachings were called) is mainly to be found in his "Mental Worker." According to Makhaysky, socialism and the socialist movement of the 19th century, express only the economic and political interests of the intellectuals as a class. It does not represent the interests of the working class—in whose ranks Makhaysky placed the manual workers only. The mental workers, he contended, were a rising privileged class who were fighting the old privileged classes—the landowners and capitalists—for control of the state. The intellectuals had higher education as their specific capital, the source of their potentially higher incomes as compared to the wages of manual workers. In their advance toward the domination of society, political democracy, or revolutionary dictatorship, was the first step of the intellectuals, and state capitalism, their second. To achieve their objective, Makhaysky maintained, the intellectuals needed the support of the manual workers. They won the

support of the latter class by helping them in their daily struggles for better wages, and by dangling before them the socialist ideal of equality. But actually (as in the case of the Soviet Union according to Nomad) the goal of the intellectuals is state capitalism. This is a system of government ownership under which the intellectuals comprise the ruling class. And the intellectuals, like the bourgeoisie before them, would exploit the manual workers.

Makhaysky conceived of socialism primarily as a conspiracy of the intellectuals against the bourgeoisie. The intellectuals call upon the manual workers to overthrow the power of the bourgeoisie and place it in the hands of the intellectuals. Accordingly, Makhaysky argued, political action is needed and is advantageous only for the intellectuals. The only essential problems of the manual workers are their struggles for immediate concrete interests, for continuous increases in wages until they are the economic equals of the intellectuals. After achieving economic equality, Makhaysky concluded, the workers must struggle to achieve equal education for everybody, in order to make impossible the existence of intellectuals as an exploiting class.

Marxists have so completely demonstrated the reactionary nature of the general principles of anarchism that a full refutation of Makhaysky's pseudo-communist anarchism would be redundant. It is only necessary to point out some of the leading errors in this specific doctrine.

1. The intellectuals are not an autonomous class. There are intellectuals whose interests are with the big bourgeoisie; intellectuals who belong to the petty bourgeoisie by virtue of income and class interests; and finally there are intellectuals like Marx and Lenin and even educated workers who fight on the side of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement. These three groups of intellectuals have no class interests in common. When the proletarian revolution occurred in Russia, the intellectuals of the big bourgeoisie and most members of the petty bourgeois intelligentsia fought desperately and unsuccessfully against the revolutionary workers, peasants, and intellectuals.

2. Socialism is not a doctrine of equality. Marx pointed out that in the transition period of capitalism to socialism, the revolutionary proletariat is faced with a society that has just come from the womb of capitalism, that still "bears the stamp of the old society." Under socialism, the first stage of communism, differences in wealth and income continue to exist. But the exploitation of man by man is impossible, because the means of production belong to society as a whole. The practical experience of the Soviet Union proves the truth of this Marxist principle. There is inequality of income but there is no exploitation. And already it is planned by 1937, at the end of the second five year plan to do away with those social factors that make for classes and class differences.

3. All economic struggles are political struggles and all political struggles are social struggles. It is the failure of Makhaysky to understand this essential principle that makes his theories reactionary in essence. The basis of his theory is a variety of "Economism" the falsity of which concept was demonstrated by Lenin. The road to freedom for the working class does not lie in purely economic struggles. There can be no "general worker's plot" which will do away with the bourgeoisie and the intellectuals.

It was inevitable that such a petty bourgeois theory, directed as it is against the revolutionary movement of the working masses, against the destruction of the capitalist state and class, and against the dictatorship of the proletariat brought to the fore minor struggles for secondary partial demands. Followers of Makhaysky declared that the vanguard of the working class is composed of the chronic unemployed, the *lumpenproletariat*, and in some instances, even hooligans. Employed class conscious workers in the basic industries were declared to be corrupted by socialist propaganda.

The followers of Makhaysky never succeeded in creating any solid, lasting organization. Makhaysky himself after the October Revolution worked in the Soviet Union for the Supreme Economic Council. He was the technical editor of the monthly magazine,



"I AM FIRST, LAST, AND ALWAYS . . ."

"—AN INDIVIDUALIST."

I. Klein

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Natural Economy, later called *Socialist Economy*. He died in 1926.

This excursus on "makhayevschina" is necessary for a clearer understanding of Nomad's book. Nomad writes in terms of Makhaysky's theories. After one hundred years of a revolutionary movement, Nomad sees nothing but a complete impasse. In view of the fact that the Soviet Union and with it the revolutionary proletariat of the world, is about to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the October Revolution and the successful carrying out of the Five Year Plan in four years, this is a very strange conclusion.

Capitalism, Nomad believes, is evolving into a higher form of "industrial management"—state capitalism. This may come about by a "cataclysm" as in the Soviet Union (Nomad looks upon the dictatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. as a dictatorship of "office holders"), or it may come as "a result of sweeping peaceful reforms adopted under the continuous, threatening pressure of the dissatisfied masses" (read manual workers). Whether the new state is headed by "moderate socialists and neo-liberals" (read fascist dictatorship) or by "extreme left radicals" (read the dictatorship of the proletariat) the next stage in the evolution of society will be a state dictatorship.

Thus Nomad makes the usual petty bourgeois prophecy that society is heading for dictatorships, all of which are alike. This view is false since it neglects the class nature of dictatorship. There is the present covert dictatorship of capitalism in the United States, France and England which is rapidly being transformed into an open fascist dictatorship. But there can be and there is no similarity between a semi-fascist or fascist dictatorship of capital directed against the proletariat, and the dictatorship of the proletariat in the Soviet Union against the kulaks and other remnants of the bourgeoisie.

Because of his "makhayevschina" bias, Nomad makes many ludicrous explanations. The most absurd of these is his conception of the Five Year Plan as a scheme concocted by Stalin to take care of some hundreds of thousands of unemployed intellectuals who were threatening the peace of the state.

Nomad's book should be read for its facts. But its theories should be criticized and evaluated according to Marxist-Leninist principles.

DAVID RAMSEY

Notes on a "Genius"

The Doom Of Youth, by Wyndham Lewis. Robert M. McBride & Co. \$2.50.

According to the English painter-thinker, Wyndham Lewis, capitalism, i.e. Super-Economic Intelligence, has organized a new class-war in order to obtain cheap labor. Through its agents, the Press, the Film and the Novel, it has turned the young and the old against each other; it has produced an ideal of Youth which makes the old feel very inferior, but which has shortened the adult life of man to about ten years,—the life of a dog, in fact. At 35 a man has attained the maximum efficiency and begins to slip. He is therefore worth less to his boss than a fresh young boy. The consequence of this is the idealization of all that is naive, babyish, feminine, immature, all that is characteristic of extreme youth. But youth is thereby perverted since it becomes peter-pannish and conscious of its own youth. The whole Aryan tradition of slow maturity towards a finished manhood is disappearing in favor of an effeminate precocity and prolonged childhood; this is due to Jewish influence, since the Jews are an old people, oriental, prolific in infant prodigies, and rather effeminate as males. In such a transition the women are bound to dominate. Hence we learn from the census that marriages of older women with young men are numerous (L. cites over 50 in one year in Great Britain); and we learn from the newspapers and best-sellers that the do-wager-gigolo relation is typical, and that all modern young men have a tendency to the "fairy."

But there is another aspect to the capitalistic exploitation of the young. The revolutionary, dictatorial capitalists,—Mussolini, Hitler, Lenin—as distinguished from the good old individualistic capitalists—Baldwin, Ford, Rockefeller—are harnessing the young to Communistic doctrines, yoking to their interested schemes the energetic, masculine, impetuous young, who by Nature should be imaginative, free, disinterested,—remote from dirty politics. The

Russians go further than anybody in this; all the young are taught to carry arms, and romantic sex-nonsense is knocked out of them. The practicality of youth-education in Russia is due to the Jews who are a very hard-headed, mature people. In Germany, however, "any Nazi found in possession of fire-arms is expelled from the party."

Lewis recognizes at one point that the class-war in question has nothing to do with the working class and the super-rich; he is describing the middle-class situation in fact. But he foresees that the middle-class is disappearing in this war of the Ages and that ultimately only the rich and the poor will remain.

He himself sympathizes with neither. He writes "*from the standpoint of genius*," as he tells us in italics several times during the course of his hectic pages; and it is from the standpoint of "genius" that he opposes present Youth-Politics, since it is fatal to genius. And from the same standpoint of genius he attacks Communism, for Communism is anti-individualistic, anti-mankind, anti-"genius." It hates anything that is in excess or superior. But he approves of unromantic, adult Youth towards the end of the book, having forgotten his earlier objections. The book is nonetheless intended as "a work of science, of science, pure and simple." "I claim that this research stands upon an equal *scientific* footing with any treatise of chemistry or biology, for instance." "If as a social historian I am unequalled, that isn't what I am here for in the present instance." No, "this book is intended to influence the *integration*—nay, to arrest the *disintegration*" of Aryan civilization.

The concluding paragraph of the book is a good sample of Lewis' social science.

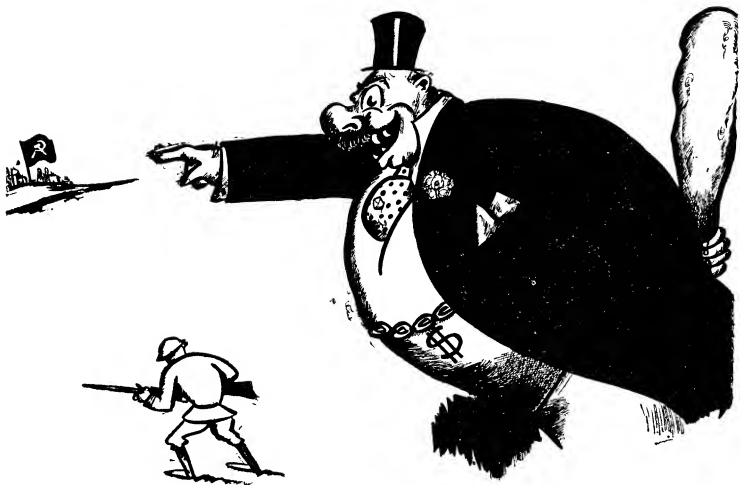
"I have said that I was a prophet. And I will prophesy that two centuries hence a long and sweeping snow-white beard will be an emblem of aristocratic privilege (no Everyman will live beyond twenty-nine and a half)—just as long skirts returned to us, but as a token of social distinction, on the principle of long finger-nails in China. Obviously *long* skirts suggest that the wearer *does not work* [L. prophesied some years ago, he tells us exultantly, that the rich, and only the rich, would return to long skirts; short skirts having been engineered by the capitalists to get cheap female labor]: long finger-nails the same. The long white beard will be the supreme token that the person possessing it belongs to the ruling-class—that he is a member of that super-class who do not die, like dogs, after ten years of active life."

I have summarized this book in more detail than it deserves—it is a shapeless heap of confusions, bitterness, self-commiseration, pretention and bad reasoning—because the author is much honored in artistic circles, and is regarded as a revolutionary intellect of the first order. A New York critic, Mr. J. W. Krutch (who makes a fetish of a supposedly disinterested "detachment," in reviewing the book in the *Nation*), said in praise of Lewis that whereas you could always tell what a Marxian was going to say, you could never tell what this enfant-terrible, this ex-left-banker, Lewis, was going to say next.

JOHN KWAIT



Otto Soglow



Otto Soglow

Revolutionary Literature

Literature Of The World Revolution: Central Organ of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. State Publishing House, Moscow. Special number (devoted to the proceedings of the Kharkov Conference), numbers 1-5, 1931. International Publishers, sole American distributors.

Despite the great service rendered the proletarian cultural movement by International Publishers in making available this publication in bulk, it remains almost unknown. Every worker in the proletarian cultural field, and all those who desire to know the actual status of proletarian culture should make this magazine his handbook.

Today when the cultural movement in the U. S. A. is beset by sympathetic and misinformed bourgeois critics, by renegades and social fascists who desire to denigrate the movement, by would-be Marxist critics, by out-and-out reactionary bourgeois critics, and a host of enemies, friendly and unfriendly, each writing long articles about proletarian literature, or the lack of proletarian literature, or the importance, or the unimportance, or the possibility, or impossibility, of such a literature—then theoretical knowledge of the principles and exact knowledge of the living examples of such a revolutionary proletarian literature is indispensable. Even most of the well-meant attempts of revolutionary cultural workers themselves are meaningless, if not a distinct danger, because of this lack of theoretical and actual knowledge. This lack has been due to the dearth of sources of information, but today this situation has been somewhat remedied, and every critic must avail himself of this opportunity to disabuse himself of his preconceptions in the light of actual practice, as it is illustrated and exemplified in the literature of the world proletarian revolution.

For example, there is the Special Number which contains the Proceedings of the Second International Conference of Revolutionary Writers at Kharkov. This number contains the discussions, resolutions, statement of tasks which lie before the revolutionary writer, reports on the state of revolutionary literature in the various countries of the world, etc. At the Conference were present the leading revolutionary writers of the world, so that this number is really a vast anthology available in no other form of their discussions of the accomplishments and tasks of revolutionary writers.

The other numbers of this magazine contain poems, sketches, stories, novels, essays, critical reviews, etc., written by outstanding literary men. Every country in the world is represented. The critical articles are of especial importance in view of the fact that there is an especial poverty in this field in English. Leopold Auerbach writes on "Our Political Position", Matsu-Yama on "Japanese Literature", Stolyarov on "Freudism and 'Freudo-Marxists'", (number 1); in number 2, Auerbach (the leading theorist) writes on Trotsky's literary views, and Plechanov's "Art and Social Life" is printed with notes; in number 3, there are the usual critical articles, an article on Eisenstein, an examination of certain magazines which is most valuable because it shows the literary theory on action; number 4 contains a very valuable article by Biha on "Proletarian Literature in Germany", Dinamov's "The 'Literary Method of John Reed'", and Selivanovsky's bursting of Poulaille's social-fascist bubble; number 5 contains Fritche's "Freudism and Art", Auerbach's article on the cultural revolution among the peoples of the Soviet Union, Dinamov on Dreiser, Ansimov on Romain Rolland, etc. Every number contains the usual book review section, international chronicle, and usual features.

It is impossible to write about these articles without examining their importance carefully and in detail. In these critical articles we have most clearly and conclusively shown to us the Marxist approach to literary and cultural problems, and the Marxist solution of the seemingly unsolvable problems which are the despair of bourgeois critics. Not only do we see the Marxist weapon as theory, but we see it in action, being use with full mastery by men of ability.

It is also impossible to more than intimate the importance of the literary work (sketches, novels, poems, stories, plays). The outstanding piece is certainly Ovalov's "Chatter" No. 4. This novel contains a distinctly new technique, a new novel-form which has risen out of the conditions imposed upon culture by the building of Socialism in the Soviet Union.

Other forms have also risen out of the October Revolution, and

all of these are represented in these five numbers. Number 5, for example, contains the "Stories of Shock Workers", which is of historical importance in revolutionary literature. Stories come from Soviet writers, American, Chinese, Japanese, French (Aragon's "The Red Front", which won for him a five-year sentence for "inciting the military to revolt" and for "instigating murder", and which caused a split in the ranks of the Surrealists; Vailant-Couturier's sketches, etc.); Czecho-Slovakian, Rumanian, Hungarian, Italian, German . . . the list might be extended.

To deal with this publication critically is impossible for lack of space. It, along with the *New Masses*, is the only revolutionary publication available in English. *Literature of the World Revolution* is the organ of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers, with sections in every country. In the U. S. A., the International Union is represented in the John Reed Clubs of America (newly federated into a national body) and the *New Masses*. It therefore represents the international revolutionary literary movement, sets the pace, and publishes the authoritative statements of the international movement. It has satisfactorily fulfilled this task, and should be considered as the vade mecum, the necessary weapon in the literary class-war. Copies of this magazine are still available. A concerted drive on the part of those of the revolutionary literary movement who know it, to bring it to the attention of those who do not know it, is essential: it is part of our task to bring authoritative knowledge of our movement and its accomplishments to the mistaken, the misinformed, and the uninformed. Beginning with the next number (published under the name *International Literature*) 1,500 copies will be available in the U. S. A. through International Publishers. Members of the revolutionary cultural movement must circulate these: it is our organ.

CONRAD KOMOROWSKI

Marxian Studies

Marxist Study Courses: Political Economy (lessons 1-3 published) History of the Working Class (lessons 1-4 published). International Publishers, 1932. 15 cents each.

The value of this series of pamphlets designed for individual study or for class work is apparent. There has been no attempt in the U. S. A. to get out a series of pamphlets containing a systematic study of the elements of the theoretic knowledge the worker needs. International Publishers has done a good job in even attempting such a series, and in carrying it out as successfully as the sale of the pamphlets attests it has done excellently.

Series 2—*History of the Working Class*—is designed to show, by means of a Marxist-Leninist analysis, the history of the working class movement in the main centers of imperialist power. Lesson 1 begins with the French Revolution, traces the disposition of the class forces, shows the Revolution in progress, and concludes with "The Lessons of the French Revolution". Lesson 2 is concerned with the Industrial Revolution in England and Chartism. Here again the subject is treated not factually, not merely historically (which is chronologically), but the actual forces are shown in action producing a result which is analyzed in "Causes of the Defeat of Chartism—its Historical Significance". Lesson 3—The Revolution of 1848 in France and Germany—again shows the class forces and again analyzes the result for its lesson to the world proletariat in its struggle for power. Lesson 4 considers the First Internationale and the Paris Commune.

The chief importance of these pamphlets is that the historical matter is treated as a real lesson—these are historical lessons which must be made a part of experience. Of course this fact results from the Marxist-Leninist analysis and is an impossible fact for bourgeois educators to absorb. But certainly this is a true function of history: its value as experience, and its being made a part of our contemporary 'sensibility'.

This fact of the lessons being real lessons accounts for the vividness and actual moving quality of the subject matter. Once again it has been shown that it takes the application of Marxism-Leninism to vivify and revitalize what bourgeois thought and manner of approach has stultified and condemned to sterility. And of course it is a new thing to find in pamphlets designed for workers a real class-approach, for the social-democracy which has published for so long the sole books in this field has presented simply a



Maurice Becker

"THEM REDS SAID A MOUTHFUL."

chronological factual account, this in keeping with its program of social-fascism.

Series 1—Political Economy—presents an up to date account written in simple language of the elements of Marxian economics. Lesson 1 contains a study of the Marxist Theory of Value, and lessons 2 and 3 a study of Capital and Surplus Value. The last section of lesson 3 illustrates the way in which a subject hitherto kept hidden beneath an avalanche of verbiage is presented. This section deals with "The Productive Relations in the Soviet Union", and those who say, like Henry Hazlitt, that Marx was an economist who died quite a long time ago, will find an unpleasant shock in this application of Marxian economics to the present day problems of the Soviet Union.

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ALEXANDER GREGORY

A 'Refutation' of Marx

Society, Its Structure and Changes, by R. M. MacIver. Long and Smith. \$3.50.

The Marx-killers that perennially appear in the bourgeois intellectual world unwittingly attest to the undying vitality of Marx's thought. Infinitely more viable than the proverbial cat and waxing somewhat as the fabulous Hydra, Marx's system of sociology (the only scientific social analysis extant, since it has stood continual acid tests of verification and refutation) not only refuses to pass out but grows in strength and extent with each new attempt at annihilation. Now more than ever, in the prevailing world economic crisis, do the inner contradictions of capitalism, so accurately laid bare by Marx over half a century ago, come to the surface.

The latest "slayer" of the dreaded Marxian "dragon" is not, like the general run of his fellow-Saint Georges, an economist or historian, but an eminent sociologist. Doctor R. M. MacIver, professor of sociology at Columbia University, has concocted a suave and sweet eclecticism entitled *Society, Its Structure and Changes* in which the founder of scientific socialism is disposed of anew. Naturally the bourgeois Brahmins hail this volume as nothing short of monumental and for obvious reasons. It not only lays low the greatest bugbear of orthodox social science but it expounds with a beautiful unctuousness those scholastic virtues dearly loved by the school-marms of our university chairs. It strives for impartiality; it glosses over the ugly class struggle; it preaches an intellectual mysticism ever stressing those honeyed clichés of sweetness and light—"the spirit," "inner values," "creative mentality," "unfolding potentiality"; it emphasizes the "great complexity of social factors" and cautions the sociologist against a dogmatic singling out of causes responsible for a social situation or a social movement—hence a glib minimizing of such elementary forces as exploitation, class interest, and class conflict.

To refute a refutation of Marx is not a difficult task. A diligent study of *Capital*, for example, will reveal to the honest student the ineptness or dishonesty of bourgeois critics. Then, too, there is no more distasteful job for the orthodox scholar than a study of *Capital*; so he skims through it or leaves its interpretation to popularizers.

How has Doctor MacIver fared with Marxism? First, in his discussion of social classes he declares that the "Marxist dichotomy" of bourgeoisie and proletariat is "too simple and sweeping to fit the facts of the class-system." He goes on to show up the "naive" Marx by citing various social facts such as the heterogeneity of the workingclass, the opposition of small capitalists to big capitalists, and the existence of the middle classes—facts that were pointed out by Marx a long time ago in *Capital*!

Let us refresh Doctor MacIver's memory. On page 729 of Volume I of *Capital* (Everyman's Library edition) Marx describes



Maurice Becker

"THEM REDS SAID A MOUTHFUL."

the effect of poor housing conditions on the lower middle class and on well-to-do sections of the workingclass; on page 738 he treats of the effect of crises on "even the better-paid portion of the working class, the labour aristocracy"; in section two of chapter XXV he points to the struggle between small and large capitalists, a struggle resulting in continual centralization of capital; in section four of the same chapter he lists various categories of the "lowest sediment of the relative surplus-population."

Now let us clarify Doctor MacIver's understanding. There is a fundamental "dichotomy" underlying our social system but it is not manifested in superficial social groupings. It is, as Marx often iterates, the basic antagonism of capitalist society, an antagonism inherent in the capitalist method of production, and it consists in the fact that propertyless workers confront idle owners of the means of production. The wage-worker, expropriated from the means of subsistence, must of necessity labor for and be exploited by the capitalist, lord of life. This is the sociological condition, simple and elementary, that distinguishes modern society; this is the primary cultural trait that characterizes the ethos of our civilization; and this is what is overlooked consciously and unconsciously by the pundits of our halls of learning.

For his second trump card Doctor MacIver slaps down the hoary anti-Marxist phrase, "economic determinism." It is the old sophistic trick of setting up a straw man and then in an *éclat* of argument smashing it to bits. Has the learned professor ever heard of the materialist conception of history and all that it implies?

It is easy enough to attack this burlesque ("economic determinism") of Marxism. The concept implies two absurdities: a fatalism that leaves out entirely the human casual factor in the social process, and a notion of motivation that ascribes all human activity to economic incentives. Here for a counter-rebuttal one need but refer to Marx's revolutionary writings and activities. One might quote part of the famous passage in chapter VII Volume I of *Capital* in which man's fundamental relation to nature as revealed in the labor process is described. "He opposes himself to Nature as one of her own forces, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his body, in order to

appropriate Nature's productions in a form adapted to his own wants. By thus acting on the external world and changing it, he at the same time changes his own nature."

Doctor MacIver's sociological approach differs fundamentally not only from the dialectical materialism of Marx but from the materialism of a group of hard-headed realists in the bourgeois camp. At heart he is a philosophical idealist and quite mystical in the bargain. His attempts to reconcile the ancient controversy, mind versus matter, lead him in the end to a vague spiritualism of his own. Evolution becomes for him an unfolding of inherent potentialities. The social structure changes when mentality changes; it is a manifestation of mentality. (. . . "directly or indirectly society is the product of a synthetic mental principle and has neither meaning nor existence apart from it.") The "outer" is the counterpart of the "inner" in the sense that the individual imparts a selective significance to the external world.

But what makes an individual selectively regard his environment? Do not external conditions mold individual and class ideology?

One can add to MacIver's spiritualism a number of other major failings that bourgeois realists would condemn. There is his avoidance of conflict as a social force; nowhere does he make it the object of special discussion; it is treated in a few passing paragraphs. The valuable social-psychological concept, "ingroup versus outgroup," is never utilized. Behaviorism is attacked because it undertakes to deal with human phenomena in objective terms—because it leaves out the "mental" factor. Freud's profound researches in human psychology, shocking to the academic philistines, are dismissed as a reduction of "the complications of the love-emotion to the hidden working of a simple organic appetite."

What then do we get out of this synthetic sociology? Lucubrations of two sorts. A number of new definitions that but add to the already over-weighted and stodgy burden of phraseology encumbering the social sciences. (For instance, man's social store is arbitrarily divided into the categories "civilization" and "culture," the former representing material means, the latter spiritual ends.) A new theory of social causation that lays out the "great complexity of factors" and sorts them into a hodge-podge of social change.

ARTHUR S. JOHNSON

Whose America?

America As Americans See It. Edited by Fred J. Ringel. Harcourt, Brace. \$3.75.

This is a collection of forty-six brief articles by as many American writers on as many aspects of life as it is lived in the United States today—or perhaps it is better to say yesterday, since most of the articles, where they reflect anything at all, reflect the mental environment of the nineteen-twenties. The editor, who is a literary correspondent for Berlin newspapers, originally edited the book for foreign readers, and so our own Literary Guild, with its precise knowledge of American audiences, chose it for distribution here. The volume is illustrated with one hundred reproductions of contemporary American paintings, photographs and cartoons, and these are far and away the finest things in the book, calculated at least to give one a high regard for American artists, which is not exactly what the articles accomplish for American writers.

Although it is obviously impossible to make any blanket criticism of a book of this nature, I must confess that after reading some of these articles I wondered what America the writers were taking about. What America, for instance, is Professor Walter B. Pitkin referring to when he says that "he lives better than anybody else"? Is the professor talking about the sixteen millions or so who are facing destitution or is he talking about himself when he says "rare the American today who does not own a car." Any foreigner, were he fool enough, might get the impression from the professor's blurb that the United States is the bourgeois paradise par excellence. But from all we have seen and heard this last year it looks more like purgatory.

Gardner Jackson's statement that certain American industrialists are "more radical in their proposals and programs than the labor leaders themselves" is of a piece with the rest of his article on the American radical. Yes, more radical in proposals—and in the use of machine guns.



Limbach

"THE TROUBLE WITH COMMUNISTS IS THAT THEY DESTROY THE HOME!"

Stuart Chase, in "The Heart of American Industry" is, like Hoover, a jolly old coordinator. "What a lordly science of engineering we might have, and to what great human benefit, if industrial anarchy gave way to industrial coordination in those fields where it logically belongs; if the essential units in the whole economic structure were articulated with the boldness and precision which we find in the industrial plant." Which reminds us of a verse in Mother Goose:

*How many ifs to social planning?
Three score ifs and ten.
Can we get there by articles?
Yes, and back again.*

With the exception of a very few of these articles, such as, for instance, Holger Cahill's competent survey of "American Art Today," and Sherwood Anderson's on "The Times and the Towns" which reveals the author's usual and groping sensitiveness to what is going on about him, most of the contents of the present book give the reader a curiously static and dated picture of America and American life. Perhaps the most striking thing about the book is its complete failure to give the reader any intimation of the great changes that have come about in this country during the last three years, the pronounced shift in mental climate, the hardening of the shell of our oligarchy, the submergence of the lower middle class, the vast army of workers, manual laborers and white collars alike, betrayed and abandoned with a cynicism and brutality which are the true index of Gardner Jackson's radically-minded American industrialists—in short, the fact that American capitalism itself has been on trial and that by all standards of human enlightenment and common decency it has been found guilty.

EDWIN SEAVER

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